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**GEORGE WILLIAMS COLLEGE**



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SLAVERY  
AND THE  
DOMESTIC SLAVE-TRADE  
IN THE  
UNITED STATES.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS ADDRESSED TO THE EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE OF THE  
AMERICAN UNION  
FOR THE  
RELIEF AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE COLORED RACE.

BY PROF. E. A. ANDREWS.

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## ADVERTISEMENT

BY THE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE AMERICAN UNION.

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THE American Union for the Relief and Improvement of the Colored Race, was formed in Boston, in January, 1835. An exposition of the principles and plans of the Union was soon after published by the Executive Committee. One of the principal objects of the Society, as stated in that paper, is to collect and publish information of an authentic character respecting Slavery. It is conceived that there is yet no inconsiderable dearth of well-prepared and trust-worthy facts respecting this great national evil. It is obvious that it cannot be peacefully removed, except as it is seen in its true light.

It is in prosecution of this great branch of their labors, that the Committee present the

following Report concerning Slavery and the domestic slave-trade as it exists in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Coming, as it does, from a gentleman who is well acquainted with the whole subject of Slavery, from an actual residence of a number of years in a slave-holding state, it will be read with much interest and profit. It gives, in the opinion of the Committee, an accurate account of Slavery, and of the public sentiment respecting it in the district of country visited. As such, it is respectfully commended to the attention of all the friends of the African race.

BOSTON, JAN. 1, 1836.

## ADVERTISEMENT BY THE AUTHOR.

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THE time for the solution of the great problem respecting the ultimate destination of the colored people of this country, has probably not yet arrived ; and though thousands of patriotic individuals, distinguished alike for wisdom and benevolence, are now engaged in devising plans in relation to this subject, it is probable that many years must elapse before our countrymen will all unite in any measure for the final settlement of this most important question. In the mean time, it is obviously of great importance that no practicable means for their benefit and improvement should be neglected. Upon this subject, the author of these Letters, in common with other members of the " American Union," believes that there is no well founded objection to a general union of all who sincerely wish to promote the best interests of the African race. Correct informa-

tion respecting their present condition, was considered by the members of the American Union as an indispensable preliminary to any relief which could be afforded them; and it was with special reference to obtaining such information, that the author of these Letters was led to visit the northern slave-holding states. The result of these inquiries was given in the following series of Letters, which are now published by order of the Committee to whom they were directed, and in the form in which they were originally written. If their publication shall tend in any degree to turn the minds of our countrymen from angry contention respecting Slavery, to a serious consideration of the duties which they owe to the African race collectively and individually, the wishes of the author will be fully realized.

BOSTON, JAN. 1, 1836.

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# LETTERS ON SLAVERY.

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## LETTER I.

NEW HAVEN, JULY 10, 1835.

To the Executive Committee of the American Union for the Relief and Improvement of the Colored Race:

As the journey which I have now commenced was undertaken at your request, and for the promotion of the benevolent purposes of the American Union, I know not how I can better discharge the duties which your kindness has imposed upon me, than by recording, in a series of letters directed to you, the impressions which I may receive, and the information which I may obtain, from day to day, respecting the situation and prospects of the colored people of this country. Their future condition is dependent, in so great a degree, upon the progress of public sentiment, that it must of course be a prominent object to ascertain the pres-

ent state of public feeling upon this subject, and to inquire how far recent discussions, respecting this people, may have affected their present prospects.

In passing through Connecticut, I have omitted no opportunity, which an extensive and intimate acquaintance with its citizens has afforded me, of ascertaining their sentiments in relation to this subject. Like the people of the other New England States, they have become deeply interested in the present discussions respecting southern slavery, but, so far as I can perceive, no considerable impression has been made upon them in favor of the doctrine of immediate emancipation. The opposition to this doctrine, on the other hand, appears to be more strenuous and decided here than in Massachusetts. This fact may be attributed to the more intimate connection between the people of Connecticut, and those of the Middle and Southern States.

The Colonization Society has always numbered among its friends the principal men of this state. From its commencement, they have favored its design of planting christian colonies upon the shores of Africa, for the purpose of conveying to them the blessings of civilization and religion, and of affording an asylum for such of the free people of color, as should be induced, by a love of independence, to seek for a permanent residence in the land of their fathers. But though friendly to these

designs of the society, they have, in general, manifested no remarkable zeal in its favor. It has ranked, in their view, with the other benevolent societies of the day, which they have been called upon to sustain by their contributions; and they have assisted in supporting it, rather from a sense of duty, than from a deep feeling of personal interest in its objects. From the first, there were some who believed that its purposes were chimerical, and especially that its influence could never materially affect the condition of the great body of the colored people in this country. When, at length, an organized opposition arose, and the objects and tendencies of the society were openly called in question, many who had afforded to it their aid, rather in compliance with fashion and general custom than from a settled conviction of duty, withdrew from its support. Some of these are now found in the ranks of its opponents, but a greater part, though by no means indifferent to the welfare of the slaves, or rather *because* they are not indifferent to it, have taken no part in the contest between the two societies. Its remaining friends are now more ardent than at any former period, but, in general, they do not claim that colonization affords the only means of benefiting the colored race. With scarcely an exception, I have found them disposed to unite in any feasible plan for improving their

moral and intellectual condition, without reference to their final destination, whether as colonists abroad, or as residents in this, their native country.

That there is at present a reaction in Connecticut in favor of the Colonization Society, is evident, and the causes are perhaps equally so. A prominent cause undoubtedly is, the alarm which is generally felt in regard to the measures of the Anti-Slavery Society. This has led those who wished to stay the progress of principles, which they deem to be of dangerous tendency to the future peace and prosperity of our country, to unite in favor of that society, against which the principal efforts of the abolitionists have been directed. Had the latter never assailed this society, it is doubtful, whether the apathy, which had for some time prevailed respecting colonization, would, for many years, have been shaken off; but now, those who fear the consequences of anti-slavery doctrines, generally yield a ready support to those of colonization.

The excitement, which so long prevailed in this state, respecting the Canterbury school, has now subsided, but no change of sentiment respecting it seems to have occurred. The time has not yet come for writing the history of that school, or of the attempt to found at New Haven a college for

colored youth ; nor, when it shall arrive, is it probable that very enduring laurels will be gained by those who acted a prominent part, either in efforts for establishing those institutions, or for preventing their establishment. For the honor of the State, I am happy to believe, that it cannot be fairly inferred from these transactions, nor even from the acts of its legislature upon this subject, that there has ever been a general disposition, on the part of its citizens, to prevent the intellectual and moral improvement of that unfortunate race. This I think will be evident, whenever these transactions shall be exhibited in their true light ; but there is perhaps reason to fear, that the measures which the state was induced to adopt, for the purpose of opposing what she viewed as a dangerous and pernicious fanaticism, were not wholly free from danger to the cause of civil freedom and of human rights. The acts of her legislature, of her courts, and of the citizens of Canterbury, it is easy to hold up to ridicule or reproach ; but it is not easy to represent, in their true light, the measures to which those legislative acts, and the decisions of her courts were opposed.



## LETTER II.

NEW YORK, JULY 11, 1835.

FOREIGNERS often complain of the unceremonious manner, in which certain classes of Americans take the liberty of introducing themselves to strangers, and of entering into conversation with them. From the frequency of the complaint, it is probably not wholly without foundation ; and it is easy to conceive, that our peculiar institutions, operating upon men uninstructed in the etiquette of more polished society, may lead them occasionally to adopt a style of address offensive to persons of fastidious taste, who are accustomed to more ceremony in their social intercourse.

I was forcibly reminded of this alleged characteristic of my countrymen, as I was passing yesterday through Long Island Sound, on my way from New Haven to this city. After enjoying, for some time, the beauty of that fine expanse of water, its deep bays encircled with woods, and the pleasant farm houses, and neat country seats, which adorn its shores, and after exhausting the usual topics of conversation, with the few persons on board the

boat, with whom I happened to be acquainted, I had retired to a shady corner, and was deeply engaged in reading. A short time only had passed in this employment, when I was interrupted by a middle aged stranger, who came behind me, and without even the formality of, "with your leave, sir," began to examine the book which I was reading, and soon inquired what it was. A single glance was enough to satisfy any American to what class of society the stranger belonged, and that no offence was intended. His object was simply to draw me into conversation, and this was the somewhat awkward expedient which he had chosen for accomplishing it. I replied accordingly, that it was a new work on African slavery. It soon appeared that this was a subject in which my new acquaintance took a deep interest, and he proceeded indirectly to inquire where I lived. "May be," said he, "you are a southerner."—I replied, that I lived in Boston. He then told me, that he belonged to S—, in Connecticut, that he was a Baptist, and knew some of the Baptist clergymen in Boston very well—having heard them preach in S—. He then remarked, that he thought "it was quite time that something was done about the slaves at the south,—that according to all accounts, they were very badly used, and if their masters would not set them at liberty, they

ought to be made to do it." I endeavored, but probably to no purpose, to convince him, that the people of the north had no right forcibly to interfere with the slavery of the south, however much we might deplore its existence. It appeared that he had heard the discussions of a lecturer of the Anti-Slavery Society, and this was the inference which he, in common with many others of the same class of our northern citizens, had derived from them;—*that it was the duty of the friends of humanity to compel the slave-holders immediately to liberate their slaves.*

This was probably a false inference from the positions of the lecturer, as the sentiment is distinctly and earnestly disavowed by the anti-slavery leaders. Still it is an inference very often made, and evinces the necessity of enlightening the understanding more upon this subject, and of addressing the passions less.

Several other passengers at length took a part in the conversation, among whom was one, who had formerly resided for many years in Georgia, and to whom that state was said to be under no small obligation for the able services rendered by him, as civil engineer, in promoting her schemes of internal improvement, but who was, at length, driven from the state by a mob, formed within sight of her capitol, and deprived of nearly all his property, the laborious earnings of many years of

enterprising industry. The excitement, of which he was the innocent victim, had arisen from a seditious publication, sent from the north by some unknown individual, for the purpose, as it was said, of exciting the slaves to insurrection. An enemy had intimated that this gentleman was concerned in disseminating the obnoxious publication ; and the mob, without inquiring into his guilt, would have proceeded at once to imbrue their hands in his blood, had he not escaped from them.

This morning I called upon a distinguished member of the Anti-slavery Society, for the purpose of engaging his co-operation in measures, for ascertaining the actual condition of the free colored people of the north, especially of those inhabiting the principal cities. This measure was intended as a foundation for efforts to relieve their wants, whether physical or moral ; and by ascertaining their actual condition, to prepare the way for its improvement.

The proposal did not meet with his entire approbation. He thought we were already sufficiently acquainted with their situation ; that it was not mere information on this subject which was principally needed, but the removal of a cruel prejudice against them. To disclose their poverty, and the meanness of their employments, he thought, would but bring them into greater contempt ; and

that such a census would be attended with great difficulty, on account of their unsettled and migratory habits. If, however, there should appear to be any adequate advantage arising from such a measure, he had no doubt that it would be cheerfully undertaken in New York, and the requisite funds obtained.

His whole conversation left upon my mind an impression of the deepest interest, on his part, in this unfortunate class of our fellow citizens, and a readiness to aid in any proper measure, which, in his view, was likely to relieve them. Indeed a long acquaintance with his principles and views, not only authorizes, but requires me to declare, that in genuine benevolence of heart, and in all the varied acts of beneficence by which kindness can manifest itself to the poor, the ignorant, and the unfortunate, there is no man, in the whole length and breadth of the land, that can claim pre-eminence over the individual of whom I have now the honor and the pleasure to speak, and who needs, to an intelligent and pious community, no other designation than this, that among American christians he has long been distinguished as *first in every good work*. To those who have been so forward in reproaching him for the part he has taken in relation to African slavery, I may be allowed to say, while holding opinions upon this

important subject essentially different from his, that for the relief of human suffering, and the enlightening of human ignorance, the entire contributions made by some wealthy states, where his name is the theme of daily reproach, would scarcely equal the numerous, unostentatious, but noble benefactions of **ARTHUR TAPPAN**.

## LETTER III.

NEW YORK, JULY 13, 1835.

THERE is little in the present condition of the colored people of the northern states of a nature to encourage the friends of abolition, either immediate or gradual. Here slavery has ceased to exist, but the expected influence of liberty, in elevating the character, and improving the condition of the colored race, has been hitherto very imperfectly realized. Their social and political relations continue unaltered, nor is there the slightest evidence that, in these respects, the progress of public sentiment is becoming more favorable to their elevation. On the contrary, the few attempts which have been made by theoretic philanthropists, to press their claims to social equality, have uniformly resulted in an indignant rejection of those claims.

An opinion that they are inferior to the whites in mental endowments is, no doubt, extensively prevalent; but this opinion is not the foundation of the aversion to which I have alluded, which is directed exclusively to their persons, and is not materially affected by their talents, or even by their

virtues. In regard to social equality, therefore, their case appears at present to be altogether hopeless; but there is, perhaps, no insuperable difficulty in their elevation to higher, more lucrative, and more honorable employments; and it still remains to be determined, whether, when the avenues to wealth shall be in a greater degree opened to them, a change will not gradually follow in their political and even in their social relations. In regard to their employments, a change has already occurred in New York, and in the more eastern cities of the Union. It is said to be but a few years since the hod-carriers and other laborers of the same class in New York, were principally negroes; now they are almost exclusively Irish Catholics. The latter, it is generally believed, are capable of performing far more labor than the former; and they are also much more industrious in their habits. Mr. M. of this city, who has studied attentively the character of these two-classes of laborers, says that an Irish Catholic seldom attempts to rise to a higher condition than that in which he is placed, while the negro often makes the attempt with success. In his opinion, the negroes in New York evince a greater capacity for improvement than the Irish Catholics, and have so managed as to keep possession of those employments which require less labor and fatigue,

while they have left the more laborious ones for their rivals in business. Mr. J., who has devoted more attention to the improvement of the colored people than almost any man in this country, has remarked, that in visiting the houses of the negroes and of the Irish laborers, he has usually found the domestic comforts of the latter, and their style of living, far inferior to what he had witnessed in the abodes of the former.

The negroes in New York have also the character of being far more trusty, and more kind and affectionate in their dispositions than the Irish. Parents do not, in general, fear that black nurses will be wanting in kindness to the children entrusted to their care, but equal confidence would seldom be placed in Irish nurses, whose kindness and fidelity had not been proved. This comparison is made, not for the purpose of depressing the character of Irish laborers, but of elevating that of the negroes, by showing the confidence placed in them as an entire class, and independently of personal acquaintance with them.

Yesterday being Sunday, I went out in search of an African Sabbath school, but having neglected to make precise inquiries in regard to their location, I did not succeed in finding one. At length I met a black boy in a clean Sunday suit, with a book in his pocket, who told me that he was going

to a school in the basement of a building, which he pointed out, at no great distance. Concluding, without further inquiry, that this must be one of the schools of which I was in search, I entered, and found, that, with the exception of my guide, there were none but white children present. The school belonged to the Dutch Reformed church, and was but thinly attended. One class, however, consisted of young men, natives of Poland and Roman Catholics, who were attending the school solely for the purpose of learning to read and pronounce the English language. The superintendent informed me that they received and taught all the colored children whom they could induce to attend, but that these were few in number, and irregular in their attendance. The only one now present constituted a class by himself, in the absence of his colored companions. The girls of this school were taught in a different apartment, and were far more numerous than the boys; but I observed no colored children among them. From this school I went to that connected with Dr. Spring's church. This is a large, and apparently a well regulated school, but it contained no colored children.

From the inquiries which I made of the friends of the negroes in New York, it seems doubtful whether the black children here are educated in a better manner now, than they were many years

ago. Mr. S., who is perhaps somewhat addicted to the inquiry, "why the former days were better than these," remarks, that since the excitement respecting the abolition of southern slavery, the colored people of this city have been taught to distrust the good intentions of those in whom they formerly reposed confidence. He thinks it is greatly to be feare<sup>1</sup>, that since that period, their education has consisted, in too great a degree, in the cultivation of malignant feelings towards the whites, and of vain wishes to possess a rank in society, which, in his view, there is little prospect of their obtaining at any time, while mingled with the whites ; and least of all while they shall exhibit no better claims to superior distinction, than the possession of their present sentiments on the subject of human rights. It is possible, he observes, that a greater proportion of colored children may now be taught to read and write than in former years ; but it is doubtful whether their education, consisting of all those influences which tend to form the intellectual, moral, and religious character, is better now than it was many years since. On the contrary, he thinks there is reason to fear, that they are laying a foundation for lives less happy, and less useful, than those of their fathers,



## LETTER IV.

PHILADELPHIA, JULY 14, 1835.

ON board the steamboat in which I left New York, I found Mr. D., a native of New England, who had long resided in the south, but who, within a few years past, has removed to New York. Our conversation, as we crossed the bay and ascended the Raritan, naturally turned to the days when we had both resided in the Southern States, and had there formed attachments, which led us still to take a deep interest in everything affecting their interests. I found my old friend was no abolitionist, in the present restricted sense of the term; still he cherished all his former kindness of feeling towards the slaves, and the same ardent wishes that some rational plan could be devised to restore liberty to them, and security and prosperity to those who have inherited so sad a birthright as the possession of slaves. He is not altogether a cordial friend of the Colonization Society, for he fears that its tendency is, to prevent the adoption of really efficient measures for the removal of slavery. Still he does not wish

the labors of the society to cease, but rather to be employed, with augmented resources, in improving the condition of Africa, and of those colored persons who may desire to go to the land of their fathers.

From South Amboy to Bordentown, several of my fellow travellers upon the railroad were from the south. They spoke of slaves, and of the Anti-Slavery Society, in such a manner as fully to evince their attachment to perpetual slavery. They wondered that the north would suffer anti-slavery doctrines to be publicly taught, and discussions respecting the propriety of slavery to be continued; and above all, that foreigners were permitted to take a part in these discussions. They declared that it was time to put an end to such seditious proceedings, and that a meeting of southerners was soon to be held in New York to take the subject into consideration. When I spoke to them of the danger which attended an interference with the subject, lest, while we attempt to prevent discussions and publications tending to produce insurrection, we should subvert the great principles of the liberty of speech and of the press, it was obvious that their ideas respecting these privileges were essentially different from those entertained in New England. The measures to which they alluded for the suppression of anti-slavery principles had, in

general, no reference to legal proceedings, but to personal intimidation and violence.

The friends upon whom I have called, as well in this city as in New York, have evinced great eagerness to know what measures the American Union are proposing to adopt respecting slavery. Such is the excitement which agitates almost every mind, that the intellectual and moral improvement of the African race, and the diffusion of correct principles respecting the religious, political, and social evils of slavery, are processes far too tardy to satisfy the general demand for immediate action.

The Young Men's Colonization Society of Pennsylvania are zealously engaged in giving stability to their promising colony at Bassa Cove. Among the friends of this society, Mr. Elliot Cresson deserves to be especially mentioned for his untiring zeal in the cause of African Colonization. To him, and to other friends of the colored race in Philadelphia, I am under many obligations for their personal kindness and polite attentions, and for the facilities which I have enjoyed through their means, for obtaining the most valuable information in regard to the condition of the free colored people of the Middle States. The friends of colonization in this city favor the objects of the American Union; but some of them are desirous that our efforts to instruct and elevate the colored race should be

confined, in a great degree, to the colonies in Africa. The separation of the white and black races they consider as an essential part of every plan for permanent benefit to the latter, and accordingly they suppose it best, in our efforts to improve their condition, that we should commence with this principle. This advice is unquestionably the result of a sincere conviction, on their part, that such a course is most expedient: but I need not say how much it is at variance with the views of those who formed the Union, and by whom it is supported.

In my walks in this city, I have observed, among the laborers, a larger proportion of negroes than in New York, and a proportionably smaller number of Irishmen. There appears to exist, in the lower class of white laborers in this city, a very bitter hostility to the colored people, the cause of which I do not fully understand. Its natural effect in producing a return of hatred, is very apparent; and unless something is done to raise the tone of moral feeling in both classes, it is evident that great evils may result from their mutual animosities.

This hostility to the negroes, on the part of the lower class of whites, is not, however, peculiar to Philadelphia. It is occasionally manifested, in an alarming degree, by the populace in several of the eastern cities, and even in the Southern States.

The negroes also, though they feel great respect for the wealthier and more intelligent whites, do not hesitate to express their contempt for such of them as are poor and ignorant ; and thus the elements of hostility are perpetually in operation, and are ready, whenever an occasion offers, to burst forth into a flame.

Pennsylvania, as a frontier territory between the slave-holding and non-slave-holding states, is becoming the receptacle of manumitted and fugitive slaves, and is exposed to all the inconveniences incident to such a population—and these are neither few nor small. Should the present system of partial manumission and expulsion continue to prevail at the south, it is impossible to foresee the full amount of evils which must result from their removal to the Middle States. In Maryland, and the states farther south, they are forbidden to reside after manumission ; and hence a great part of those who are liberated, or who escape from servitude, flee to the Middle States, especially to Pennsylvania and New York. Here they meet the tide of Irish immigration, and a contest commences for obtaining the means of subsistence. Such, however, is the superior industry of the Irish laborer, that he is gradually supplanting his rival, wherever severe and patient toil is requisite ; and the free negro is often driven, by the joint operation of sloth and of

real inability to acquire employment, to resort to dishonest means of support. It is impossible that this state of things should long continue; and if the free states had no other interest in the subject of slavery, and no right on other accounts to raise their voice upon the subject, the evil of which I now speak, would be sufficient to justify them in expressing their fervent wish for the final termination of a system, which occasions a constant influx of a class of citizens who threaten destruction to all their valuable institutions.

## LETTER V.

BALTIMORE, JULY 16, 1835.

My journey from Philadelphia to this city was rendered pleasant, not only by the rich variety of beautiful scenery, through which we pass, and which one can never cease to admire, but also by the company with which I travelled. Among others into whose society I was accidentally thrown, were two families from the extreme south, who were returning slowly homeward from their summer's tour to the Northern States, and stopping so long in the principal cities through which they passed, and at the various watering places which they visited, as to reach Louisiana after the first frosts of autumn should have rendered their return safe. The gentlemen might have been twenty-five or thirty years old; the ladies were a few years younger. The latter had each the charge of an interesting child two or three years old, the special care of which was committed to two colored nurses, who were their only attendants. It was not easy to determine which of the group were hap-

piest, the sedate, intelligent, and dignified fathers, the accomplished mothers, the playful children, or their young, well fed, and well dressed nurses.

The situation in which domestic slaves are often placed, in prosperous, moral and intelligent families, is one of far more unmixed happiness than is usually imagined by those who have never witnessed it. The mistake into which many fall, upon this subject, arises principally from their failing to estimate properly the amount of happiness occasioned by the mutual affection between the white and the colored members of the same family. This attachment is of course a more available source of happiness in virtuous families, than in those of an opposite character; but, like parental and filial affection, it is rarely entirely wanting, even in the most hardened and profligate. This relation is in reality more like that of parent and child, than like any other with which it can be compared, and is altogether stronger than that which binds together the northern employer and his hired domestic. The slave looks to his master and mistress for direction in everything, and insensibly acquires for them a respect mingled with affection, of which those never dream who think of slavery only as a system of whips and fetters—of unfeeling tyranny, on the one part, and of fear mingled with hatred, on the other. The latter is

the usual picture of slavery which is presented to the people of the north, and it is no wonder that southern masters, who know how wide from truth this representation is, are not particularly ready to listen to the counsel of those, whom they perceive to be so ill-informed upon the subject. Wanton cruelty may be too often practised by masters, as it is by many parents; but this, which is but an occasional incident of slavery, should not be exhibited as the prominent evil. This may be removed by the influence of humane feelings, and especially by christian principle; but countless evils will still remain, inherent and inseparable from the system.

Mr. A., an intelligent and influential member of the Methodist church, to whom I brought letters from a friend in Boston, states as his deliberate opinion, that the condition of the free blacks in Maryland is much worse than that of the slaves. As one proof of this, he alleges, that the proportion of deaths among them is much greater than in any other class of society. Their *opportunities* for intellectual improvement he supposes may be, in general, greater than those of the slaves; but they either have few motives to improve them, or are little influenced by such motives. Hence they are addicted to sloth, with all its attendant evils. Their imperfect moral discipline, and indolent

habits, lead them also to the commission of petty thefts, in consequence of which great numbers of them are sent to the penitentiary.

These facts cannot probably be questioned, but in explanation of them it ought not to be forgotten, that a very prominent cause of the degradation of the free blacks, is not their own freedom, but the slavery of others. The owners of slaves of course look with jealousy and suspicion upon the free, and may often pursue towards them such a course as is calculated to depress and discourage them. They are interested in making it appear that freedom is no blessing, and they have, to some extent, the power to prevent its becoming so. If slavery were universally abolished, at that moment the free black would become valuable. He would take his place in the field with his comrades, as one of a company of hired laborers. He would be encouraged to industry, and laws would be enacted to promote his welfare and happiness. With such a change in his circumstances, who does not perceive that a corresponding change in his character is likely to occur?

There is a general aversion, on the part of the colored people of this state, both bond and free, to the plan of colonization in Africa. This dislike Mr. A. attributes principally to the publications of

the Anti-Slavery Society, which are extensively circulated here among the free blacks. He even regrets that the Methodist church has given its sanction to the plan of the Colonization Society, since it prejudices the colored people against its members and teachers. The Methodist church, in this state, includes a great number of colored members, among whom are many slaves. The doctrine, lately maintained in New England, that the gospel cannot reach the heart of a slave, finds little to countenance it in the actual condition of the southern churches.

There are no free schools for colored children in this city, but several private schools are kept by free blacks. Opportunities are afforded them for attending Sabbath schools, but they are in general negligent of this privilege. The Methodist churches devoted to the people of color, are well filled. A part only of their preachers are white; but some of the most popular preachers of that church have been, at various times, stationed here as preachers to the African churches.

There is but one opinion here among all classes respecting immediate emancipation. All agree that it would be extremely dangerous, on account of the indolent and improvident character of the

negroes. It is thought that they need much previous preparation for freedom, and that any measure for complete emancipation, in order to be safe to others, or useful to the slaves, should be gradual in its operation. To the inquiry, "how shall they be prepared," it is replied, "by training them to virtuous and industrious habits, and giving them useful and profitable employment." It is said also that there is much more kindness exercised towards the colored people here than in the Northern States. The negroes are represented as in general a peaceable and quiet people, and as not peculiarly prone to excitement, when not provoked by ill treatment, or influenced by alcohol. Like other persons in their situation, they are addicted to intemperance; and although attempts have been made to introduce temperance societies among them, very little success has attended the efforts.

For the purpose of ascertaining the comparative mortality of the whites, the free people of color, and the slaves, I have obtained from the Board of Health, copies of their reports for several years past. From these it appears that since the summer of 1823, an accurate account has been kept of the number of deaths in each of these classes. Inquiries were made, not only at the office of the Board of Health, but from many well-informed

citizens, respecting the confidence to be placed in these reports, and no reason could be found for distrusting their accuracy. Some of the results of these reports will be given in a subsequent letter, from which it will appear that the annual mortality among the free blacks is considerably greater than in either of the other classes.

It must not be thought, however, that the unfortunate condition of the free blacks affords a valid argument for perpetuating slavery. It proves, indeed, that something besides nominal freedom is requisite to insure their happiness; but this is equally true of all men. Idle, dissolute, and intemperate white men, not less than those of African origin, pass their lives unhappily, and die prematurely. To every race, virtuous principles are alike necessary; and it is of equal importance to all, to be placed in circumstances favorable to the cultivation of their higher powers. It is plain that the free blacks in this country do not, at present, enjoy a fair opportunity for the cultivation of their talents, nor can they properly be expected to become, in the highest degree, useful, as members of the communities to which they belong, until greatly changed by the influence of moral and religious instruction.



## LETTER VI.

BALTIMORE, JULY 16, 1835.

FROM 1790 to 1810 the number of slaves in Maryland had slowly increased; but from that period until the present time it has gradually diminished. In 1790 the whole number was 103,036, in 1810, 111,502, and in 1830, 102,994. This diminution has been occasioned, partly by manumission, and partly by removals to other states, through the operation of the domestic slave trade. The free colored population, on the contrary, has rapidly increased during the whole period from 1790 to the present time. In 1790 their number was but 8,043; in 1830 it had increased to 52,938. The augmentation has been owing to the joint operation of manumissions and natural increase. In 1830, the slaves in this state were only about twice as numerous as the free people of color, but in 1790 they were nearly in the proportion of 13 to 1. It is obvious, therefore, that should there be no change of policy in the state, slavery will terminate at no very distant period, by the operation of causes now in progress; and it is equally plain,

that when that period arrives, the number of free blacks in the state will be such, that the public welfare will depend greatly upon the character which they shall have assumed. If virtuous and intelligent, they will add much to the prosperity and strength of the state, but should they possess a different character, they will materially impair its strength, and impede its progress in improvement.

The proportion between the colored and white population of this state is nearly the same now as in 1790, viz. 10 colored to 19 white persons. A little more than one third of the whole population therefore is colored, and, under the operation of existing causes, will continue nearly the same.

There is one fact in relation to the two classes of colored persons in this state which merits particular attention. More than one fourth of the whole number of free blacks is found in Baltimore alone, while of the whole number of slaves in the state less than one twenty-fifth part reside in this city. In this state, slave labor, employed in agriculture, has long since ceased, with few exceptions, to be profitable; and to this cause most of the manumissions of the slaves, as well as their emigration to other states, are to be attributed. The employment of free blacks in agricultural labor has not been found to yield a greater profit than that

of slaves, and the residence of the former in the neighborhood of plantations where slaves are employed, is disliked by the planter. Hence the emancipated negroes generally leave the country, and congregate in the cities and larger towns, in such numbers that it is not easy for them, even if so disposed, to find profitable employment. If the labor of colored men could be made profitable in the cities, a greater number of slaves would be employed there, since they are of so little value in the country ; and the fact that few are thus employed proves that their labor in the cities cannot be made profitable to their owners.

That the moral and physical condition of the free negroes in Baltimore is worse than that of the slaves, is a fact to which all intelligent men with whom I have conversed most fully bear testimony. The satisfaction which arises from the consciousness of freedom, or of having escaped from the control of a master, they of course enjoy ; but, independently of this, the condition of most of them is represented as more depressed than it was while they were slaves. They are not compelled to labor, it is true ; but, on the other hand, they do not enjoy the advantages which would spring from labor, in the preservation of their health and morals, and in providing wholesome food and necessary clothing. Allusion was made in my last letter to

the great mortality of the free colored people of Baltimore, when compared with that of the slaves. During *each* of the eleven years which have passed since a record of the comparative numbers of deaths among the slaves and the free colored people has been kept, it appears that the mortality has been considerably greater among the latter than the former. The following table is extracted from the records of the Board of Health, and exhibits the numbers of each of the three classes who have died in Baltimore during the several years specified, from 1824 to 1834 inclusive.

Year.	Free Col'd.	Slaves.	Whites.	Total.
1824	368	48	1052	1468
1825	332	57	1156	1545
1826	429	97	1396	1922
1827	357	60	1081	1498
1828	340	100	1262	1702
1829	429	100	1320	1849
1830	478	89	1519	2086
1831	514	118	1676	2308
1832	998	164	2410	3572
1833	534	98	1773	2405
1834	596	115	2036	2747

In 1832 and 1834 the city was visited by the cholera.

In 1820 and 1830 the city contained as follows:

Year.	Free Col'd.	Slaves.	Whites.	Total.
1820	10,294	4,357	48,087	62,738
1830	14,783	4,124	62,083	80,990

From these data it appears that the proportion of deaths annually among the slaves is nearly as 1 to 44 of the whole number; among the whites, 1 to 38, and among the free colored people, 1 to 29. The chances for life therefore among the slaves in Baltimore appear to be considerably greater than even among the whites, and far greater than that of the free blacks; the deaths among the slaves being only about two thirds as great as among the free people of color.

This remarkable longevity of the slaves is an interesting fact, in its relation to the salutary effect of temperance and regular exercise upon human life, and illustrates, in a remarkable manner, the advantages which would spring from the general adoption of correct habits in these respects. Many causes tending to shorten the lives of slaves, might be avoided by freemen; and hence the lives of the latter might be prolonged in even a greater degree than those of the former.

It is much to be wished that we possessed the means of extending this comparison to the entire population of this and of the more Southern States. It would throw much light upon the condition of these three very distinct classes in southern society, and, though it could never exhibit slavery as a desirable state, it might serve to show what were its essential evils, in distinction from such as

are accidental. Its most important practical use would probably be, to convince every philanthropist that liberty is not the only boon which can be bestowed upon the colored race, but that, along with this, it is necessary that their moral and intellectual habits should be greatly improved, since otherwise liberty itself may prove no real blessing.

## LETTER VII.

BALTIMORE, JULY 16, 1835.

THIS evening I called upon a Presbyterian clergyman of this city, to whom I had letters, and who, knowing my connection with the American Union, turned the conversation to a discussion of the principles and objects of that society. Of these he highly approved, but expressed his doubts of the utility of any association at the north for the benefit of southern slaves. In his view, the only way to approach this subject successfully is through the medium of the Colonization Society. Of this, he remarked, there is no great jealousy at the south, but every northern plan of benevolence to the slave would be rejected, if for no other reason, yet for this, that it originated in the wrong quarter.

The very measures, however, which the Union proposes, are those now pursued by this gentleman and his friends. They are organizing congregations for public worship, and Sabbath schools for the education of the children, and nothing is wanting, but the systematic and sustained exertions

which would spring from a more perfect organization, to give efficiency to their philanthropic labors.

In reply to my inquiries respecting the means of religious instruction enjoyed by the colored people, I was informed that there are three or four congregations of colored Methodists in this city, in regular connection with the Methodist church, and one or two of Independent Methodists. There is also one congregation of Episcopalian, and one of Presbyterians, with both of which, as well as with those previously mentioned, flourishing Sabbath schools are connected. When we consider, however, that the number of blacks of both classes is, at the present time, more than 20,000, it is obvious that six or eight small congregations will comprise but an inconsiderable portion of the whole number; and we ought not to be surprised that, with such means of moral and religious improvement, even freedom itself has hitherto failed to elevate them in any considerable degree.

As the clergyman, of whom I have spoken, has enjoyed the best opportunities for becoming acquainted with the character of the people of color, I directed my inquiries particularly to this object. He represents them as indolent, and of course exposed to all the vices which spring from sloth, but as in general peculiarly free from the controlling influence of the malevolent passions. It is sel-

dom that they are guilty of acts of violence and outrage; and in this respect they are very favorably distinguished from the Irish laborers, who have been employed upon the railroads, and other similar works in this state.

In regard to the domestic slave trade, he states that no inconsiderable part of it is still carried on in an indirect or circuitous manner. The productions of Kentucky, and of other Western States, their *horses, mules, cattle and swine*, are *driven into the Atlantic states, where they are often exchanged for young negroes*, which are taken to the west, and there sold either to slave dealers from the south, or to the people of Kentucky and the other Western States. In the latter case, the Kentuckian probably sells to the southern trader an older and more valuable slave, and pockets the difference in their value. In this way, such slaves especially as happen to be disliked by their masters, are sent out of the state, and their places supplied by younger ones, who, when they have attained to their full strength, will perhaps follow in the same path. Family ties are often disregarded in this traffic. The slave obtained by barter in Virginia, is perhaps so young as to have formed no matrimonial connection, but those carried to the south are often separated from wives and children. The south-western trader wants only those slaves

who will be immediately serviceable upon the cotton and sugar plantations. Young children, therefore, are for his purpose of no value. The object of the planter is to get as much labor as possible from his slaves; and when they fail, he chooses to supply their places by purchasing fresh hands from the north. If deprived of this foreign supply, he would perceive the necessity of paying more regard to the lives of his slaves, and of making greater efforts for raising their children.

The following incident, illustrative of this *branch of trade*, was mentioned as having recently occurred in Louisiana. A slave trader had sold *a lot* of slaves to a planter, and among the rest was a young mother with her infant child. After the bargain was completed for the whole number, the planter offered to return the infant, as of no value to him. This offer aroused the indignation of the trader, who considered it a reflection upon his humanity, and demanded, in great fury, whether the planter considered him such a monster, that he would be willing to tear the infant from its mother's bosom! The simple truth was, that the planter, well knowing the usual mortality in that country among young children, and that the full task of a field hand was to be exacted from the mother, was willing so far to listen to the combined voice of

humanity and interest, as to leave the child in the trader's hands, where its life *might be* preserved.

Such humanity is indeed worth little to the poor slave, and it is almost a profanation of the term to speak of it as influencing the parties in such a transaction. And yet, even such a traffic as this does not of course render men fond of cruelty for its own sake. The love of money may have gained the ascendency over every other principle ; but when the claims of a master passion are satisfied, other and better feelings may influence the conduct.

It is said that the free blacks in Maryland are not by law excluded from any trade or employment which may be practised by the whites, except from the vending of spirituous liquors, and from the command of vessels ; and both of these restraints have a reference to the slaves, lest they should be allured to intemperate habits, or should be secretly conveyed to distant ports. In New York, on the contrary, a colored man, it is said, cannot drive his own hack or cart.



## LETTER VIII.

BALTIMORE, JULY 17, 1835.

In this city there appears to be no strong attachment to slavery, and no wish to perpetuate it. If the slaves were equally distributed, not one white person in fifteen could be a slave holder; and it is probable that in fact not one in thirty owns a slave. The majority, therefore, are not bound to the institution by any interest, either real or supposed, and are in reality longing for its final extinction. Of this, however, they would be far more desirous were they not compelled, by their situation, daily to observe the unfortunate condition of the free blacks, and to be impressed by the belief that the situation of the slaves is not in fact improved by their emancipation. Could they see them in a course of progressive elevation, after they have gained their liberty, they would, in general, become eager for the entire abolition of the system of slavery. The efforts of the friends of the race in this state, should, as it seems to me, be principally directed to this object, that when there shall be added to the free white inhabitants of the state, a

free black population amounting to more than one third of the whole, it may be a population which shall increase the happiness and resources of the state, instead of hanging as a burden upon it, or menacing the destruction of all that is valuable in its institutions. No state can ever flourish while more than one third of its inhabitants are sunk in ignorance, without industry and without moral principle.

After all that is said, however, respecting the unfortunate situation of the free colored people in this city, they appeared to me, in passing through various parts of the old and new town, to be about as well dressed as the poorer class of whites, and better than some of the Irish, and especially the Irish children, with whom I met.

An interesting case of a negro now confined in the penitentiary was mentioned to me this morning, by a gentlemen who has long been the teacher of a Bible class in that establishment. The crime for which this negro is confined is that of *stealing his own wife*, who is a slave.

By the laws of God, a man is not only permitted, but required to leave, when it is necessary, his father and his mother, to whom by the ties of nature he is most tenderly attached, who have watched over him in infancy, and have loved and cherished him in childhood and youth—to leave

even these, and his brethren and sisters, his earliest and dearest companions, and to "cleave to his wife." And yet here is a system of man's invention, which is at variance with this original purpose of the Creator, to such a degree, that for the sake of a stranger to their blood, the husband shall be deprived of the society of his wife, and shall be confined with malefactors for attempting to dissolve a relation, which neither nature nor their own consent had formed. But it is useless to inveigh against particular acts of cruelty, arising from the unnatural relation of master and slave. They are often, in all their cruelty, but the necessary and natural results of this relation, and may be essential to its continuance. As well might we complain that ice is cold, or that fire is hot—they must continue so, or cease to exist.

I have just returned from a visit to a colored preacher of the name of Livingston. He belongs to the Episcopal church, and was in Boston about two years since, soliciting funds to enable his parishioners to pay a debt which they had contracted in building their church. He obtained, for this purpose, five or six hundred dollars, but they still need as much more to free them from their embarrassment. I cannot but hope that when this fact is known to the wealthy members of that church, with which this humble branch is connected, they

will at once relieve them from their debt, and thus encourage them to persevere in their laudable efforts for self-improvement. For this purpose, a correspondence might be opened with the bishop of this diocese, or with the reverend clergy of that church residing in this city, from whom all necessary information respecting this feeble church could be obtained.

Mr. Livingston has a school of colored children of both sexes, whom he instructs in the elements of education. For this purpose his church, during the week, is converted into a school house, and his pupils are instructed upon the Lancasterian plan. His present number of pupils is about eighty, and his terms for tuition are from \$1.50 to \$1.75 a quarter.

He informs me that there is another school in the Old Town, containing forty or fifty pupils. This is kept by John Fortie, a colored man belonging to the Methodist church, whose father is regarded by the colored members of that church as a venerable patriarch among their preachers. William Watkins, another colored member of the Methodist church, has a school of sixty or seventy in Sharp street; and besides these there are five or six schools kept by females, including one which is taught by the Sisters of Charity. Mr. Livingston says that there is no free school for colored children

in Baltimore, and that only a small proportion of them ever learn to read. A considerable additional number might be taught in the schools which now exist, and new schools might be opened for their benefit, if a little exertion were made for this purpose by the wealthy and benevolent.

The children in Mr. Livingston's school looked well, were very decently clad, and appeared to be intelligent. They are almost exclusively the children of free parents.

In reply to my inquiries respecting the condition and prospects of the colored people in the city, Mr. L. says that they are decidedly improving. The act of 1813, the operation of which was much feared by them, has remained almost wholly inoperative. He says that the whole colored population, with scarce an exception, is opposed to colonizing in Africa. They do not believe that the plan was intended for their benefit, but for that of the whites. He says they have letters circulating among them, purporting to have been written by some who have been sent out to Africa, and speaking in disparaging terms of that country. "No man," he observes, "will be viewed by the colored people as their friend, who advocates the cause of colonization." The abolitionists, on the contrary, are in high favor with all of them. Mr. L. says, that if their dislike to colonization is a preju-

dice, it will be best removed by enlightening them, so that they may better understand their own interest. Should they be able to see those advantages in emigration, which the friends of colonization believe to exist, he is sure that emigrants will not be wanting.

## LETTER IX.

BALTIMORE, JULY 17, 1835.

THERE is considerable diversity in the opinions of gentlemen with whom I converse, respecting the situation of the free people of color, but all agree that it is one of very great depression. In general, they pronounce their condition to be worse than that of the slaves in everything, except the consciousness of freedom: but in this comparison, they have especially in view the situation of domestic servants, not of those upon the plantations, with whose condition they are less familiar.

I have been much interested to-day in an interview with several of the officers of the Maryland Colonization Society. It was delightful to find, in the midst of slavery, men who feel deeply for the condition of the slave, and who delight in doing good to him, not only in the way in which they are called to act officially, but in all other modes which an enlightened humanity may propose. The prospects of this society, under the munificent patronage of the state, are of the most encouraging kind. The location of the colony at Cape Palmas seems

to have been particularly fortunate; and notwithstanding the general prejudice of the people of color against the plan of colonization, this society has no difficulty in obtaining, at all times, a sufficient number of the most desirable colonists.

They have adopted the principle, in its fullest extent, of carrying to Africa no colonist who does not go voluntarily. A resolution to this effect was passed unanimously by the Board of Managers, on the 2d of May, 1835. Its passage was occasioned by an application to them to send to their colony thirty-five manumitted slaves, two or three of whom were unwilling to go, although their reluctance prevented the emigration of the rest, who were desirous of removing, but were unwilling, on account of family connections, to be separated from them.

The Act of 1831-2, many of the provisions of which have been thought to bear very hardly upon the slave, appears, so far as its objectionable features are concerned, to be nearly a dead letter. It was passed at a period of excitement, and will probably never be executed in its rigor, except during some similar state of public feeling. The provision, that a slave emancipated under this act, and not consenting to freedom upon the prescribed conditions, should return to slavery, has not been enforced, so far as I could learn, in more than a single case.

The manumissions made since the passage of the law of 1831-2, are required to be reported to the Board of Managers of the State Colonization Society, and to be recorded in their office. The number hitherto reported amounts to 1026; but the returns are so incomplete, that the whole number of manumissions, in a little more than two years, is supposed to be not less than 1500. These, it should be remembered, have been voluntarily emancipated, by the gradual progress of humane sentiments; and when the high price, which slaves have for some time borne in the market, is considered, we may well be surprised, as well as delighted, with the evidence of good feeling and christian principle evinced by these acts. At the present prices, they might have been sold for more than half a million of dollars—a great sum to be relinquished as a voluntary sacrifice to principle, in so bad a world as this. A small part only of these slaves have been liberated for the purpose of being sent to the colony; so that the Colonization Society seems not, in this instance, to have operated injuriously upon general and unconditional manumission.

By the law of this state before referred to, slaves may be permitted, for peculiarly good conduct, to remain in the state after manumission; and, in construing the law, it is held by the courts having

cognizance of such cases, that the testimony of one respectable witness, that he is well acquainted with the party, and that he possesses a fair character for honesty and temperance, is sufficient to secure to him this privilege. In some of the more Southern States, a similar privilege is occasionally conferred by special legislative enactment; and nothing but some uncommon benefit, either of a public or private nature, is sufficient to entitle the slave to such a distinction.

This afternoon I have visited the penitentiary, in company with Mr. A., a worthy member of the Methodist church, to whom I have before alluded as engaged in teaching a Bible class in this prison, and to whom I am indebted for many attentions, and especially for pointing out numerous sources of valuable information. It appears that the Methodist preachers stationed in Baltimore, have long been accustomed to give religious instruction to the inmates of this prison, not only without reward, or expectation of reward, but without the least recognition of their services on the part of the government of the state. The same is true of the instruction given in the Sabbath school by members of the same church. It was pleasing to perceive, by the smiles of recognition on the part of the convicts wherever my friend appeared, that grati-

tude, on their part at least, was not withheld for such important and self-denying services.

The penitentiary is a state institution, and the modern improvements in state prisons have not yet been fully introduced into its management, on account of the unsuitable nature of its buildings. These are now undergoing a change, to adapt them to a discipline like that practised at Auburn, and at other similar state prisons.

My inquiries at the penitentiary were greatly facilitated by the politeness of the warden, Mr. Jones, a member of the Methodist church, and a gentleman of great benevolence, as well as energy of character, and also by the clerk of the institution, by whom I was furnished with copies of the reports of the prison for the last four years. From these reports it appears that the commitments for this period have been,

	Whites.	Colored.
Males,	177	198
Females,	10	78
Total,	187	276

Of the whole number, therefore, committed in four years, about three fifths have been colored, and two fifths white. None of these are committed for a shorter period than two years, although some of them were convicted of thefts in which the value

of the article stolen did not exceed *fifty cents*. Slaves are not sent to the penitentiary ; and hence it will be seen that the whole number of colored convicts is furnished by the free blacks, amounting, at the last census, to no more than 52,938, while the white population was 291,108.

## LETTER X.

BALTIMORE, JULY 17, 1835.

FROM the statements in my last letter, you will perceive that, were the commitments to the penitentiary proportioned equally among the whites and free blacks, the latter would be to the former as 4 to 22, while in fact they are as 13 to 22.

It is said that the cases of recommitment among the colored convicts are fewer than among the whites : and there is other evidence, also, that the former are more frequently reformed by their punishment than the latter. Most of the prisoners in the penitentiary are confined for theft ; and of the 88 female convicts, white and black, 82 are confined for this crime.

The besetting sin of the free colored people, as I have repeatedly remarked, is sloth ; and this, in connection with their imperfect moral discipline, leads to the commission of those crimes for which they are so severely punished. It is said also that in those counties where there is the greatest number of slaves, the free blacks are regarded with peculiar suspicion, and are prosecuted for small crimes, for

the purpose of sending them away from the neighborhood of the plantations. Very few of them, after being released from their confinement, ever return to their old residence. The greater part remain in Baltimore.

It is well known that among the whites at the south, there is little dislike to the persons of the blacks, in comparison with that which is felt at the north. Hence they are constantly seen in the same carriages with the white members of the family ; and black nurses are often employed for young children, who continue to sleep with and to take care of them until they are five or six years old.

A clergyman of the Methodist church, with whom I conversed this morning respecting the condition of the free people of color, represents it as in general exceedingly deplorable, both in regard to their moral state and their external circumstances. Their poverty and ignorance, he supposes might be remedied, could they be induced to practise industry, but they do not feel sufficiently the motives to exertion to enable them to rise above their present unfortunate situation. It is probably too much to expect, that a people sunk in ignorance, as are the African race in this and in every other country, should be brought at once to feel the motives to exertion, in that degree

which their situation demands. Could they be trained under a system of common school education, and especially could they form separate communities, where they would see none in a hopeless degree superior to themselves, it might be satisfactorily known, whether they are capable of feeling, in their full extent, the influence of those motives which lead other communities to put forth great and constant exertions to advance in improvement. Such an experiment is now making, but under great disadvantages, in Hayti, and the world is looking with solicitude to its final result.

During my former residence at the south, as well as upon my present journey, I have heard it objected both to the slaves and the free blacks, that they are backward to aid each other, when in poverty or distress. It seems difficult to reconcile this fact with their general kindness towards the white members of those families with which they are connected. Instances of this latter trait of character have so often fallen under my notice, that it would not only be doing injustice to them, but violence to my own feelings, not to acknowledge their voluntary acts of kindness to a race from which they have received many wrongs.

The following case is introduced for the purpose of showing some of the difficulties by which the conscientious master feels himself to be sur-

rounded. A clergyman of this state, distinguished for his piety and talents, and who had determined never to be connected with slavery, found himself suddenly, by the legacy of a relative residing at a distance, the owner of twenty or thirty slaves. He resolved not to continue to hold them in slavery, and as soon as his other duties would permit, he made them a visit for the purpose of adopting measures to free himself from so great a burden. He assembled them together, and told them that he was unwilling to hold them in slavery, or sell them to another master; that the laws did not permit him to liberate them with the intention of having them continue in the state, and that even were it in his power, he should be unwilling to do it, with the certainty that their situation would be in every respect worse than it then was. Equal objections existed to sending them to the Northern States, where they are not wanted, and where their previous habits had disqualified them to struggle with the untried difficulties which would surround them.

He told them that one remedy remained—that they might be liberated and remove to Africa: that for this purpose he was willing not only to set them at liberty, but to furnish them with all the funds necessary for their removal and comfortable settlement in the colony. He then explained to

them the advantages which, in his view, would result from their emigration, but found them wholly incredulous, and opposed to removal. Some of them did not even believe that there was such a place as Cape Palmas, and if there were, they could not believe that it would be for their benefit to go to the colony. They even suspected, such was their extreme ignorance and distrust of the whites, that the negroes who leave this country for the colony, are carried to the south and sold as slaves.

He asked them if they had not full confidence in his word. They replied that they believed him to be sincere, but that he might himself be deceived, as he had never been at Cape Palmas; that if he could tell them from his own personal knowledge, that it was best for them to go to Africa, they should believe him. He then proposed to them to select one of their number to go out as their agent, and explore the colony, promising to defray the expense, and to permit them to be governed by his report. To this proposal they did not object, but no one of them was found willing to engage in such a mission.

The consequence is, that this clergyman is still, what he most of all dislikes to be—a slave holder. His duty may perhaps be plain to many of our northern friends who have never crossed the Hud-

son, but to those whose eyes are perhaps dazzled by too near a view, it is encompassed with great difficulties. And yet this is substantially the case of thousands, who, contrary to their own wishes, have, by the laws of the states in which they reside, become the owners of slaves.

## LETTER XI.

BALTIMORE, JULY 17, 1835.

THE facts stated at the close of my last letter have been verified by a particular conversation with the clergyman alluded to, who expressed his deep concern at the embarrassing situation in which he has been placed. He has never attempted in any way to increase his property by their means, nor will he consent to do so. He waits but for an opportunity to place them in a better situation, and will then not only be willing, but will rejoice, to liberate them. He remarks that a disposition to emancipate their slaves is very prevalent among the slave holders of this state, could they see any way to do it consistently with the true interest of the slave, but that it is their universal belief, that no means of doing this is now presented, except that of colonizing them in Africa.

He states also that there is not only a lamentable want of religious instruction for the colored people, but that much which they receive is of the most imperfect kind, especially that which is given

by colored preachers. The forms of the Methodist church are in general most pleasing to the negroes in this state, and to that church they are most fond of attaching themselves. The black preachers have the advantage of understanding the feelings of their hearers, and of being understood by them ; but they are so illiterate that their instructions are comparatively of little value.

There is but one sentiment among those with whom I have conversed in this city, respecting the possibility of the white and colored races living peaceably together in freedom, nor during my residence at the south, and my subsequent intercourse with the southern people, did I ever meet with one, who believed that it would be possible for the two races to continue together after a general emancipation. Such unanimity should not be overlooked by theorists, if destitute of personal acquaintance with the constitution of southern society. The great experiment, which is now making in the British West Indies, will eventually settle this question ; but it must be remembered that this experiment is but begun. It has been made too by a legislature, whose constituents, as well as themselves, will be but little affected by the result. Should every white man be compelled to leave the West India islands, the fair fields of England and her venerable institutions would remain unaffected ;

but when once the slaves of the south are liberated, they form an integral part of the population of the country, and must influence its destiny for ages,— perhaps forever.

The Irish and other foreigners are, to a considerable extent, taking the place of colored laborers, and of domestic servants, even in this city, where there are probably at this time nearly 20,000 free colored persons, and 3,000 or 4,000 slaves. The Irish are found in public as well as in private houses, mingled with the blacks, and performing the same offices ; and the great public works are executed by them exclusively. It is obvious, that this is not owing to the want of colored laborers in sufficient numbers to perform all the services which may be required. It is to be attributed either to the physical inability, or to the comparatively idle habits of the free blacks, who, in general, will not labor regularly ; and to supply their waste of time, it becomes necessary to employ foreigners, who, as a class, are far more industrious than the negroes. On the whole, the Irish are fast encroaching upon the territory of the blacks, and threaten ultimately to supplant them wherever slavery may cease. In this view, the question of the ultimate issue of slavery in this country is assuming, in connection with Irish immigration, a new and most interesting form. It is still uncertain how far the climate of

the south will permit the Irish laborers to proceed in their encroachments ; but there is not a little evidence that they will be able to penetrate far into the present dominions of slavery.

A gentleman from South Carolina, who had no theory upon this subject to support, but whose remark was made casually in the course of conversation, recently stated to me his conviction, that free colored laborers would never be employed in any considerable numbers in that state, because the Irish and other foreigners were found as laborers to be so much more profitable. It is then at least possible, that we see in this influx of foreigners, the means by which slavery is to be progressively driven south, and gradually confined to comparatively narrow limits. The negroes increase rapidly while they continue in slavery ; but when liberated, their increase seems to be checked ; and it is possible, that at some future period, the more rapid advance of the white population in all the states which shall be free, will leave the blacks in a small and continually decreasing minority.

There appears to be but one mode of preventing the result to which I have now alluded. Should the character of the negroes undergo that great change, in consequence of the influence of freedom, which many have anticipated, and which all desire, their progressive diminution may be in part prevented.

So far as the experiment has yet been made in this country, there are but few and feeble indications that a remarkable change of character is likely to result from their possession of freedom, while they shall continue mingled with the white population. In the states where they have been longest free, they still possess substantially the same character. They have rarely risen to intellectual distinction, or to the possession of wealth ; and should this fact be attributed to the depressing influence of prejudice, which will not permit them to enjoy a fair field for enterprize, there is reason to apprehend that this prejudice will long continue to operate in full force, and that the relative rank of the two races will remain substantially the same that it now is. If the feeling of aversion which now subsists between them shall continue, its future effects will probably be the same ; but between native Americans and the Irish emigrants, there is no distinction which education and a change of external circumstances may not remove ; and they must, in the natural course of events, soon blend into one common mass. *It is then possible, that the gradual extinction of the African race in this country is prevented only by their state of slavery.*



## LETTER XII.

BALTIMORE, JULY 18, 1835.

I HAVE just had an interview with Mr. S., one of the smaller slave dealers in this city. I introduced myself by inquiring at his office the present price of good "field hands," from 18 to 25 years old. He says that "likely fellows" are worth from \$500 to \$650: girls of the same age, from \$300 to \$500; but to bring the latter price, they must be uncommonly fine ones, as they are worth, for the field, only three or four hundred. He says that slaves of all kinds are now very scarce in the market, and in great demand. He has been trying all the week to find some,—has been everywhere, far and near, and incurred no small expense, and can hear of but one. He is at the jail, and is a "prime fellow—as likely a *nigger* as he has ever seen, but has a defect in one of his hands, owing to some accident which happened when he was young." Mr. S. does not believe that he could use an axe, but he would be a good field hand. He "has the refusal of the fellow," if he shall choose

to take him ;—and has offered \$500 for him, but his owner refused to take it. Mr. S. thinks, however, “that with his defect, it is as much as he is worth.”

Mr. S. says he has “a little girl—bright mulatto—seven years old, whom he will be glad to sell ; as fine a servant as he ever saw ; quick and handy—will go to market for any small article, as well as many who are much older.” He will sell her for \$250.

He informs me that there are a dozen or more in town engaged in “the business,” but none of them are doing much, as negroes are so scarce. A good deal however is doing in the District of Columbia, especially by the firm of Franklin and Armfield. The greatest part of the slaves from the District are sent to the Southern States by water ; but some during the summer go by land. A friend of Mr. S., who was in his office during our conversation, remarked that he met about three hundred last summer, who were all sent over land by one house. Mr. S. thinks that “hands will be plentier” in a few weeks, when the harvest is over. He concluded the conversation, which he had carried on in the style of a northern horse-jockey, by asking how many hands I wished to purchase. I told him that I had not yet completed my arrangements, and thought I should re-

main in this quarter two or three weeks, until the harvest was gathered. Finding that he had taken me for a southerner, and not caring to undecieve him by answering other questions which he might put, I took leave without further conversation.

After leaving the office of Mr. S., I called upon a member of the Society of Friends, to whom I had letters, and who has long taken a deep interest in the condition of the people of color. He is of opinion that their situation, especially that of the free blacks, is improving. He does not know, however, that, as a class, they are more respected than they were formerly ; but individuals among them are treated with much respect. There is not, however, as he states, the slightest disposition to permit even these to enjoy either social or political equality.

The majority of the people of Maryland he supposes to be in favor of some plan for prospective and gradual emancipation ; but such is the division of political power among the counties, that a small number of white inhabitants, in those counties which possess the most slaves, are able to control the legislation of the state. The counties are all entitled to an equal vote in the legislature, although in some there are not more than eight or nine thousand white inhabitants, and in others, four or five times that number.

Of the details of the domestic slave trade, he observes, that it is difficult to obtain much information, as its operations are in some degree concealed from the public eye. The trade is not a clandestine one, but being offensive to the feelings of a large portion of the community, it is in a great measure withdrawn from public observation. There is an establishment near the end of Pratt street, owned by Mr. W., who has made himself very rich by this trade. He has, like the other large slave dealers, a prison, or *slave pen*, of his own, in which he keeps the slaves until a cargo is completed. They are then carried on board the vessel, usually at night, and immediately sail for New Orleans. The business is conducted by him, and by the other regular traders, in such a manner, that there is never any suspicion of unfairness in regard to their mode of acquiring slaves. In this respect, at least, their business is conducted in an honorable manner.

Mr. W. has a brother at the south, I believe in Louisiana, who receives the negroes shipped from this port, and disposes of them to purchasers. On hearing of such an agency as this, one is ready to conceive, that the man who has grown wealthy by receiving and selling these poor and defenceless creatures, must be in all respects a monster—one whose diabolical spirit must manifest itself in his

very countenance, and in all the intercourse of private life, so that all men, and especially the unfortunate slaves, will instinctively shrink from him as from a demon. And yet, how wide from the truth would such a conclusion be ! This very man is reported, upon the best authority, to be a most mild and indulgent master, and an upright and scrupulously honest man. His recommendation of a slave will instantly raise his value in the market, for his word is implicitly relied upon by all who know him. When he makes his appearance among his slaves, they gather around him with every demonstration of affection ; and even the little children manifest the most eager solicitude to share in his attentions.

Such facts as these may to some appear to be inconsistent with the established laws of human nature. They exhibit a man as having the inhumanity to devote himself to the acquisition of wealth by trafficking in the miseries of the already wretched African, as being the voluntary agent for receiving the husband who has been torn from his wife, and the wife who has been forcibly separated from her husband and her children, and for selling them into the most hopeless slavery, and yet, under all these hardening influences, operating habitually upon his character, as cultivating, at the same time, those gentle maners and kind affec-

tions which render him an object of attachment to his fellow men, and even to his slaves themselves. Such inconsistencies and apparent contradictions in human character are, however, by no means uncommon ; and it would not perhaps be difficult, on the other hand, to instance some, who are the devoted friends of the colored race, and of the oppressed of every name, who have cultivated towards those whose sentiments are opposed to their own, so bitter a hostility, as to have rendered their characters in a high degree repulsive.

## LETTER XIII.

BALTIMORE, JULY 18, 1835.

At the office of the Maryland Colonization Society, I have become acquainted with many facts, through the politeness of the agent of the state, the Rev. Wm. M'Kenney, tending to show an unexpected readiness, on the part of the slave holders in this state, to manumit their slaves. In general, there is an expectation that, when liberated, they will go to the colony; but many cases are independent of such a reference. The disposition now manifested would doubtless be still more common, if the present mode of manumission were not, on many accounts, one of the worst which could be devised. If those only received their freedom who were previously prepared by suitable discipline and instruction, or who had evinced their fitness for this distinction by their superior intelligence and virtue, freedom would be viewed as the reward of peculiar excellence, and of course would be sought for by the exhibition of virtuous character. If even an opposite plan were steadily

pursued—if freedom were made the uniform punishment of extraordinary crimes, or utter worthlessness, and if, when freed, they were peculiarly exposed to contumely and insult—dear as liberty is, the virtuous slave might hesitate to purchase it at such a price, preferring slavery itself to ignominy and general contempt.

The present mode of manumission, on the contrary, is founded on no principle of utility, either to the manumitted slave or to his companions who continue in bondage. There is no principle of selection. The subjects are taken indiscriminately, according to the accidental caprice or conscientiousness of their owners. No useful impression therefore is made upon the slave; he is left to desire freedom, but is not stimulated to virtuous conduct in order to obtain it. The treatment of those who are manumitted is, indeed, in a great degree, such as it might be, if the sole object were to punish them for their vices while they were in bondage, and to deter others, by their example, from desiring freedom. This effect, however, it cannot produce, while it is obvious that the severity with which they are treated has, in general, no reference to their moral character. Few inducements are presented to them to rise above their present situation, and thus, while the state adds to the number of its freemen, it adds nothing to the vir-

tue and intelligence of its citizens—nothing to its physical or moral resources.

In farther conversation with the benevolent member of the Society of Friends, of whom I have before spoken, he states his full conviction that the greatest obstacle, at this time, to the progressive improvement of the African race in this country, is the interference of the people of the north. So long as this continues, he thinks that the apprehensions of the south will prevent any farther improvement in their condition.

Advertisements for the purchase of negroes, and for the restoration of runaway slaves, are very common in the newspapers of this city, as well as in those of Washington. A Mr. P. advertises for slaves, and requests such as wish to dispose of any to call either at "*Sinner's Hotel*," or at his residence on "*Gallows Hill*." Certainly these are very appropriate places to hail from, when embarking in such a traffic.

SUNDAY EVENING, JULY 19, 1835.

This morning I went, in company with Mr. M'Kenney and another friend, to visit the African Sabbath school in Sharp street. This school has more than four hundred names upon its books, but

not more than one hundred now attend upon its exercises, as two schools have recently been formed in other places, the members of which formerly belonged to this. The superintendent and teachers, as well as the children, are all persons of color. With the teachers I conversed freely, and listened attentively to the exercises, and have seldom been equally gratified by the appearance of any Sabbath school. In the teachers I found not only a degree of intelligence far superior to what I had expected, but a conscientious devotedness to their employment, at once the earnest and the evidence of success; and I have never seen, among the pupils of any Sabbath school, more countenances indicative of respectable talents, or of good dispositions.

The clerk of the school, a bright mulatto of an uncommonly fine and intelligent countenance, apologized for having come in somewhat late, observing to us that he had been sent with a bundle to the Annapolis steamboat. I could not but reflect with sorrow upon the evils which everywhere spring from a profanation of the Sabbath by the owners of stages and steamboats, and by those masters who employ their servants in unnecessary labors on this day of holy rest—a day so necessary to the moral and religious improvement of all, but especially of those who enjoy no other day of rest. This clerk is a porter in a store; and few clerks

in Boston could make a neater book of records than his.

A gentleman who was present inquired of one of the teachers whether there were any slaves in the school. He replied that there were a good many, and that he himself was one. It appeared however upon inquiry, that by the will of his master, who was dead, he was to be free at the age of twenty-eight, and that he had but eighteen months more to serve as a slave. When I asked him whether he should be glad to be free, his countenance showed, as he answered, "Yes sir," that it was a question which no one, who had been a slave, would ever need to ask; and still his master and mistress had been distinguished for their kindness to their slaves. His brother too, he told us, would soon be free, and his mother was already so. Would that those who doubt whether a slave prizes freedom, could have seen the joyful looks with which this christian slave stated these simple facts in the history of his family.

The room in which the school was held was well fitted up and clean, but the approach to it was through a narrow and dirty lane in the rear of the building. Under the stairs by which we ascended to the school room, two swine were dozing away the morning, and merely looked up and grunted as we passed. It should be remarked, however, that

these animals act as licensed scavengers in the streets of the "monumental city," and are particularly active in the neighborhood of the markets.

At ten o'clock we left the school and repaired to the African church in the same street. This church, like the school we have just left, belongs to the Methodists, and the preacher, this morning, was an old colored man. His subject, as he informed us, was "Philip's going down to Samaria, and preaching on the road to the eunuch *and the queen of Ethiopia.*" Philip, according to the preacher, was told to "go and *catch* right hold of the chariot," (for so he interpreted the direction "to go and join himself to it,") which having done, "he heard the eunuch reading to the queen, and asked him what he was reading about." An apology was made for the seeming impropriety of Philip's being "so bold as to *catch* hold of the chariot and to ask a *gentleman* such a question," and the preacher concluded that the evangelist could not be blameable, as he only followed his directions, "which," it was thought, "he *mought* very properly do."

With all his quaintness and ignorance of letters, the preacher evidently possessed respectable talents, and uncommon skill in illustration. He warned his hearers against supposing that they could enter heaven without love to Christ in their

hearts ; this he told them was the only “*free pass.*” “If they wanted to go from the south to Philadelphia or New York, they knew very well that they would be stopped on the way if they had not a free pass, and so it would be if they should try to enter heaven without a pass containing the name and the broad seal of Christ.” All this was perfectly intelligible to his hearers, who showed in their countenances and by their animated responses, how thoroughly they entered into the spirit of his remarks. The responses of the Methodist church seem to be especially adapted to such an audience as were there assembled. They serve to fix the attention of such hearers, and to cheer and animate the preacher, by the interest they evince in his performance. Were the preacher engaged in pursuing a connected train of thought, the responses might perhaps interrupt the attention of his audience, but with such a preacher no effect of that kind is likely to occur.



## LETTER XIV.

BALTIMORE, JULY 19, 1835.

THE responses, of which I spoke at the close of my last letter, became, in some instances, so sudden and piercing, as to be even startling to one unaccustomed to such an accompaniment; but they plainly served to arouse the attention of the assembly in a remarkable degree; and without some such device, it would probably be impossible to engage, for any considerable time, the attention of such undisciplined minds.

On the whole, there was occasion to regret that persons so ignorant, should spend their Sabbath in listening to instruction which could do so little to enlighten their minds; but, on the other hand, it was consoling to reflect, that some of the doctrinal principles, and much of the morality of the gospel, were thus imparted to them from week to week, and that there was conclusive evidence that the hearts of many were brought into subjection to the gospel of Christ. In the Methodist church, the instruction given upon the Sabbath is followed by

that of the "class meeting," and by instruction from house to house during the week, as the teachers have opportunity. By such means the minds of the colored people belonging to this church, are brought under a course of training to virtuous habits, which seems peculiarly adapted to their condition.

This afternoon I visited a colored school and congregation, who meet in the "old town," and are under the patronage of the Presbyterian church. Their room, which is a small one, is entirely full, though it is but two or three years since the congregation was formed; and they are now greatly in want of more extended accommodations. Most of the children are learning to read; a few, however, are receiving instruction in catechisms. On account of its more recent formation, this school is less perfectly organized than that in Sharp street; but the teachers have a good spirit, and many of the children are very promising. Both here and at the school which I visited this morning, I was treated with great affection by the teachers, and have seldom passed so pleasant a day as this. Even the children seemed to have been impressed by their teachers with the belief that I was their friend, and listened to my conversation with most earnest attention. One of the younger classes, while not employed by their teacher, I overheard

disputing whether my name was *Mr. Goodman*—their teacher having told them that a *good man* from Boston was coming to see them.

The singing at Sharp street, I should have before remarked, was excellent,—such as our friend Mr. Lowell Mason might perhaps make better, but which, I am sure, it would give him exquisite pleasure to hear, even prior to any improvement. There is, in some of the African voices, a wild and touching pathos, which art can never reach. Such tones I have often heard at evening, through the depths of a southern forest, when the singer evidently supposed that no ear was listening to the melody, save the ear of Him to whom the song of devotion was ascending.

WASHINGTON, JULY 20, 1835.

THIS morning I left Baltimore by the railroad for this city. As I passed from the hotel to the *depot*, I was greeted by the kind and respectful salutations of some of the colored men whom I had met at church yesterday, and who were now going forth to their daily labors. This was the first morning that the locomotive had travelled upon this road; and even now we could proceed in this way no farther than to Bladensburg. The whole population, for a considerable distance on each side of

the road, had come out to see this novel sight, and all appeared to be highly gratified. The animals, on the other hand, who had received no previous notice of what was to be expected, seemed to be universally taken by surprise, and were generally filled with consternation. Cows, horses, pigs and turkeys were scampering in all directions, only stopping occasionally to take another look at the terrific object, and then posting off with fresh speed. A bull, however, whom his whole herd had deserted, stood his ground nobly, and even advanced a few paces for the purpose of reconnoitering his foe. No creature seemed to be indifferent to our movement, except one young calf, who, with the true philosophic *nil admirari*, appeared to consider the whole as a very common affair, and in perfect accordance with his "firm and unalterable experience."

The road appears to be finished in a superior manner, and the cars are very large, containing each sixty passengers. Like the northern works of a similar nature, it has been constructed by the labor of Irish emigrants, although the country which it traverses is teeming with colored men, who stand greatly in need of more profitable employment. When our national system of railroads and canals shall be completed, they will form a stupendous monument of the labors of the Irish emigrants—

such a monument as few strangers have ever reared in their adopted country, since the pyramids of Egypt were erected by a subjugated people.

From Bladensburg the company proceeded in a long train of carriages, accompanied by a band of music, and entered Washington with sound of trumpet, and amidst the greetings of great numbers who had assembled to witness the display.

#### JULY 21.

This morning I met with an old and valued acquaintance, who has resided for more than a quarter of a century in North Carolina, and is familiar, not only with the domestic policy, but with the peculiar sectional views and interests of the south. A foreign education had prepared him to notice whatever is peculiar in the organization of southern society, and his long residence there, under circumstances probably more favorable than those enjoyed by any other individual in that state, for obtaining authentic information, has deservedly given great weight to his opinions upon subjects connected with the interests and feelings of the south. He has long taken a deep interest in the condition of the colored population, and, for some years past, has devoted a great part of his time to investigations respecting their situation

and prospects, and to exertions for their improvement.

From him I learn that the feelings of the colored people in North Carolina, and in the neighboring states, have been greatly changed, within a few years, on the subject of colonization. Formerly many of them were inclined to view that project in a favorable light, as affording a good opportunity for enterprizing individuals to establish themselves in a country where they would be forever independent of the influence of white men. Now they entertain the same dislike to the society, which is so common among the colored people of the north. To a great extent, they view it as a plan to perpetuate slavery.

## LETTER XV.

WASHINGTON, JULY 21, 1835.

THE real sentiments and feelings of the negroes, in respect to their situation, it is very difficult for any white person to ascertain, and for a stranger, it is nearly impossible. They regard the white man as of a different race from themselves, and as having views, feelings and interests which prevent his sympathizing fully with theirs. Distrust, even of their real friends, is no unnatural consequence of the relation which they and their ancestors have so long borne to the whites.

When therefore a white man approaches them with inquiries concerning their condition, they are at once put upon their guard, and either make indefinite and vague replies, or directly contradict their real sentiments. The following is the substance of many a conversation of the kind to which I allude.

“You have a kind master, I think, Jack.” “O yes, massa, he very kind, he very good to de niggers.” “You always have enough to eat

and drink, I suppose.” “Yes, massa, plenty to eat ;—massa give all de niggers plenty to eat.” “Do you have to work very hard, Jack ?” “O no, massa, me no work hard—only sometimes.” “Have you a wife ?” “Yes, massa, she live at Major B.’s in W. county.” “Why, that is a great way off: how often does your master let you go to see her ?” “Me go to see her and de children once t’ a month.” “And how long does he allow you to be absent from the plantation, when you go to see your wife and children ?” “I always goes a Friday, and stays till Monday.” “And suppose you should not come back till Tuesday, what then ?” “Why, massa no give me pass only to Monday ; must come back den.” “Or else anybody will flog you that finds you ?” “Yes, massa.” “Do n’t you wish, Jack, that Major B. would buy you, so that you could live with your wife ?” “Massa good massa, me no like to leave him—no leave nassa.” “Well, do n’t you wish then that your master would buy your wife, and bring her here ?” “O yes, massa, me like dat very much.” “Well, Jack, suppose your master would give you your liberty ; I suppose you would like that best of all, would you not ?” “O no, massa, me no want to be free, have good massa, take care of me when I sick, never ‘buse nigger ; no, me no want to be free.”

All this is said with an air of sincerity well fitted to produce the impression that the slave does not wish for freedom, and that he would not accept it, even if offered to him. The master himself, accustomed to hear such replies, though at heart aware that no dependence can be placed upon declarations made in such circumstances, half forgets that they are untrue, and repeats them to others, and especially to northern men, as evidence that no change is necessary in the situation of the slave, in order to render him as happy as his nature will permit. Nor is it others only who are deceived ; the slave himself is probably not always aware of the insincerity of his replies. He has perhaps never viewed his own emancipation as possible, and does not know in what manner he would receive a proposition sincerely made of restoring him to freedom.

But even when he has fully awaked to a sense of the value of liberty, and when he sighs in secret to obtain the direction of his own conduct, and to pursue his own happiness without the control of others, he is fully conscious of the danger of expressing his new feelings and the visions inspired by hope. He knows that he shall be less valued if he is suspected of being discontented, and that the danger of exchanging his present lot for one still worse, will in such case be greatly increased. He

looks, too, upon all white men, and especially strangers, as the friends of his master, and does not dare to trust his secret wishes to those who may immediately betray him.

Thus all continue to slumber upon the verge of the volcano; but it is only a feverish sleep, from which the slightest sound, which may be mistaken for the rumbling of the fires in the abyss beneath, is sufficient instantly to arouse them. Then they look around them, for a moment, with dismay; but the alarm soon subsides, and all sink again into repose. Not so however in case of actual insurrection. Then the apprehensions and consequent sufferings of all classes and all ages surpass description. The strong and courageous master, whom no merely personal danger could appal, who would go calmly to meet a foreign enemy, trembles when he remembers that his wife and children are exposed to a foe who will show no mercy, and with whom war is only another name for massacre. Women and children, the aged and the helpless, tremble before a savage foe, from whom they expect not even the generosity which belongs to war in general, though indeed the tender mercies of ordinary wars are but cruelties. No more enviable is the situation of the slave himself. If indisposed to join in the revolt, he is apprehensive that he shall be suspected by both parties; and is terrified by

fear of the insurgents, upon the one hand, and of the whites, upon the other. In such circumstances, the slightest suspicion is often a passport to instant death. To repel such dangers the strongest measures are felt to be necessary; and when those who are suspected cannot be kept in safety till the danger is past, death is called in to afford that security which nothing else can give.

In general, however, no danger is felt in the villages or large towns, except upon occasions of peculiar alarm. The timid mother may indeed "clasp her infant closer to her bosom, when she hears the sound of the midnight fire-bell," because her fears at such an hour excite the image of robbery and massacre, but commonly little apprehension of personal danger is felt, except in more lonely situations.

In every town and village an active and vigilant patrol is abroad at such hours of the night as they judge most expedient, and no negro dares, after the prescribed hour, to be found at a distance from his quarters. Great cruelty is often practised by the patrols, and such as is not only hard for the slaves, but even for the humane master to bear, when exercised towards his unoffending slaves. Often have I known a company of licentious and inebriated young men sally forth after an evening's carousal, and in the stillness of night commence

their round of domiciliary visits to the quarters of the negroes, while their inmates were buried in sleep. The principal object of such visits is to terrify the slaves, and thus secure their good behavior, and especially to prevent their wandering about at night. If in such case a slave is found at any distance from his own home without a *pass*, he is often whipped upon the spot, without judge or jury, and with no other limit to the severity of the infliction, than such as the drunken caprice of the patrols may prescribe. I have known the husband thus chastised for being found in company with his wife, if he was not able to produce his pass or permit to visit her on that night. The state of a family thus violently disturbed during their slumbers, by the curses, and execrations, and violence of irresponsible men, may be in some measure conceived. The husband and father is dragged out and flogged before his terrified wife and children, while the females fear every indignity that such ruffians may please to perpetrate. Thus they proceed, until exhausted by fatigue and dizzy with the fumes of their debauch, when they return to their homes, leaving weeping, and dismay, and terror, where they found peace and repose.

## LETTER XVI.

WASHINGTON, JULY 21, 1835.

WHILE residing some years since in Carolina, an old negro, whom I had employed to take care of my garden, came to me one day, weeping so immoderately that for some time I could not clearly ascertain the cause of his distress. At length I found that it related to his wife, who lived some ten or fifteen miles from the village where I was residing. Peter had just then heard that his wife's master was about to sell her to a *speculator*, as the negroes call those who trade in slaves, and his grief appeared to be inconsolable. I tried to pacify him, by telling him that it was probably a false report, and that her master would not be willing to part with so valuable a servant as I had always understood that she was. Peter replied that he heard that her master was obliged to sell her in order to pay his debts. I then told him, that if that were the case, I presumed that he would not sell her to a trader, but to some one of his wealthy neighbors, so that she might still remain in the

county. He replied—"This is my third wife ; both of my other wives were sold to speculators, and were carried to the south, and I have never heard from them since." In this case, however, Providence favored poor Peter. Her master had, indeed, been bargaining for her sale, but some accidental circumstances had prevented the accomplishment of his purpose. Still it was felt by Peter to be but a temporary respite, and the danger of separation from her, like the fabled Tartarean rock, was always impending over him, and threatening every moment to crush him beneath its weight.

On another occasion, as I was walking at a small distance from my house, I met a company of six or eight negroes, who were upon their way to Alabama or Mississippi. At the moment when I came up, they, with the trader to whom they belonged, were resting themselves under the shade of some large trees which overshadowed the road, and by which they were protected from a scorching mid-day sun. Most of them were young females ; and they had all been recently purchased in the eastern part of the state, where their friends still resided. My attention was particularly drawn to one of the company, a young man five and twenty or thirty years of age, whose arms were confined by chains. He was a tall, well-formed, and athletic negro, whose countenance indicated consider-

able intelligence. I asked him what he had done, which rendered it necessary that he should be chained. He replied promptly, but respectfully, that he had done nothing. "Why then are you chained?" "I don't know," he replied,—"may be they thought I would run away." "But why should they suspect that you would wish to run away?" "I don't know,—may be it was because they thought I should want to get back to my wife and children." "Have you then a wife and children?" "Yes, I have a wife and four children in H. county, and may be they thought I would not like to leave them!" His story was probably a true one, and yet, with the full knowledge of this fact, he had been sold into distant bondage, and was now leaving his wife and children forever. Well might the owner of such a slave suspect, that he would long to escape and return once more to those who were dearer to him than the whole world beside.

The amount of suffering which is occasioned by such sales is very great, for scenes of the same nature with those which I have described are occurring somewhere almost every day. When travelling in Maryland a few years since, the following case of distressing separation was mentioned to me by a young gentleman who had been an eye-witness of the occurrence. While a vessel at Baltimore was receiving its cargo of slaves for New

Orleans, and just as she was about to set sail, a young woman who had been purchased a short time before by the trader who was freighting the vessel, was brought by her former master to the wharf. She carried in her arms a young child which had not been sold with the mother. When they reached the wharf, she sat down, unconscious of everything but of the presence of her infant, upon whose face she continued to gaze, in apparent agony, while affording it nourishment for the last time from her breast. At length the signal for their departure was given ; her former master bore away the unconscious infant, and the mother, while uttering the most agonizing cries, was conveyed on board the vessel.

The by-standers were deeply affected with pity for her, and with indignation at the parties concerned in the transaction, but there was no remedy. It was *a fair business transaction* arising from the nature of slavery, and it is by no means improbable that her master was greatly afflicted by the necessity which compelled him to occasion so cruel a separation. The purchaser it is likely was a cruel man, but he probably justified himself in pursuing his employment, by reflecting that if he did not trade in slaves, others would do it, and take the profit.

In addition to the sufferings occasioned by actual separations, there is, as I have before intimated, a constant dread felt by the whole slave population, that they shall be torn from their families and friends.

It is sometimes said that liberty is not greatly prized by the slaves, or even by the free blacks themselves. I have seen the attempt made to convince the slave that liberty would not place him in more eligible circumstances. He would sometimes yield to the arguments, but there was always something in his manner which showed, that, even if the reason was confounded, the heart did not yield its assent. Although the condition of the free blacks in the Southern States is proverbially wretched, and most of them are sufficiently apprized of its inconveniences and miseries by their own bitter experience, yet none of them manifest an inclination to return to slavery. Fully acquainted with both conditions, they submit to the inconveniences of freedom, not indeed contentedly, but with no design of improving their circumstances by sacrificing their liberty. While residing at the south, I knew an intelligent free mulatto whose name was Sam. I do not remember in what manner he obtained his freedom, but he richly deserved it by his uniformly good behavior. A friend of mine who took a deep interest in his welfare, often

conversed kindly with him concerning his prospects, and endeavored to suggest plans for his benefit. He was struck with the unfortunate circumstances in which the free blacks were placed, and once endeavored to convince Sam that his condition had not been improved by obtaining his liberty. Sam listened to his representations in respectful silence, conscious of his own inability to maintain the cause of freedom by an array of argument. When my friend had concluded his appeal, Sam's only answer was, "AFTER ALL, IT'S A HEAP BETTER TO BE FREE." Brief, however, as the answer was, it spoke the feelings of the whole human race whether bond or free. If liberty could ever be accounted worthless, it would be such a liberty as falls to the lot of the free negro, when surrounded by slaves and their masters. Yet, with no better prospects than these, he was able to decide, with a clearness of apprehension that nothing could confuse or mislead, that freedom was still invaluable. While this principle remains in full operation in the heart, it is in vain that the slave is convinced that his external circumstances would not be improved by obtaining his freedom: though satisfied that by remaining a slave he shall be better fed, and clothed, and sheltered, and nursed when sick or old, he still feels that the power to choose for himself and to direct his own actions is more

than an equivalent for all these advantages, and his heart replies, "*After all, it's a heap better to be free.*"

It is true that we hear of slaves to whom freedom is offered, and who, under all the circumstances refuse to accept the boon ; and such cases have probably sometimes occurred. If these, however, were investigated, they would be found to present some peculiarity which causes them to be apparent exceptions to a universal principle. Even the gift of liberty may come too late. When life has been drained to the very dregs, or when freedom would render its possessor a houseless wanderer, disqualified by a life of dependence to make provision for his own wants, and especially when kindred and friends must all be deserted to obtain that boon, which will be worthless if they too cannot participate in its enjoyments,—in such cases it is not wonderful that even freedom should be refused. "Let me return to my dungeon," said the tenant of the Bastile, the doors of whose cell had been thrown open, after having been closed upon him for forty years. "Let me return to my dungeon. My eyes can no longer endure the clear light of day ; and of all who once loved me, not one survives." And yet who ever thought that the cells of the Bastile were in themselves

preferable to the fair field of nature, or confinement within their walls to personal liberty.

I should not think it necessary to make even a passing remark upon this subject, had I not heard the owners of slaves so often allude to their contentment and satisfaction with their condition, as a reason why slavery might with propriety be continued. But though sometimes driven to such arguments in self-defence, I must do them the justice to say that, in general, they are far too clear-sighted, and too well-informed, not to see their fallacy. When a distinguished northern politician was reported, a few years since, to have spoken lightly of the evils of slavery, in comparison with the condition of the free laborers of other countries, the suggestion was received by slave-holders with scorn, and was attributed to an unworthy desire of obtaining popularity in the south. I am happy to believe that his remarks were misunderstood, or were uttered without due reflection. It is certain that they produced no conviction of their truth among those who best know what slavery is.

## LETTER XVII.

WASHINGTON, JULY 21, 1835.

FROM a gentleman well known in this country for his literary and scientific attainments, and who now resides in this district, I have been furnished with many interesting facts respecting the domestic slave trade, and the miseries often occasioned by it. Scarcely a week passes, in which pressing applications are not made to him by negroes, who are about to be separated from their families, and sent to the south, begging him to purchase them, in order to prevent their removal. Some of these cases are of a very trying kind. There is one at this moment pending, which is fitted to excite the keenest indignation, not only against the master, but against the system which gives occasion to such flagrant injustice.

A negro, about twenty-five years old, who is married, and has three or four children, has just applied to my informant, stating that he is to be sold immediately to a slave-dealer, and separated forever from his family, unless he can find some

resident in the District who will consent to purchase him. He is a member of a church in this city, and has uniformly sustained a christian character. His master wishes to raise a few hundred dollars, which he has not the means of doing conveniently, without the sale of one of his slaves. Now it happens that the purpose for which this money is to be raised is well known, and is no other than to purchase a mulatto woman, with whom he is known to be criminally connected. As if even this were not a sufficient provocation to the moral sense of the community, there is an aggravation arising from the motive which determined the master to sell the slave of whom I am speaking, rather than any other. He had endeavored to employ this slave in bringing other colored women into the same relation to him, as the mulatto woman whom I have mentioned, but here the servant felt that he had a Master in heaven, whom he was bound to obey, rather than his earthly master. His refusal had greatly irritated his master, and led to his being selected for sale.

A poor woman is now residing in this city, who, together with her two children, was, some years since, separated from her husband, and brought to this place, in order to be shipped for Georgia. In her distraction at being separated from her husband, she leaped from an upper window, and fall-

ing upon the pavement, her limbs were broken in a shocking manner. She is a helpless cripple, but in her affliction she has applied to the great Physician, who heals the maladies of the soul, and is now waiting in the confident hope, that she shall meet again her dear children "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

Cruelty to slaves, though odious in all, seems especially so in females, from whom we expect examples of kindness and gentleness. Notwithstanding, however, its revolting character, instances of great cruelty on the part of mistresses as well as masters are occasionally witnessed.

A woman, who is still residing in this city, had a slave for whom she had no regular employment, and whom she allowed to find work for himself, requiring him to bring her weekly a certain sum of money as his wages. He was diligent and faithful in endeavoring to find employment, but sometimes could obtain but little, and consequently could not always earn the amount which his mistress required. Irritated by repeated failures, and instigated by a revengeful spirit, she resolved at length to sell him to a slave-dealer, so that he should be compelled to leave the District, where his relations reside. She accordingly sold him to a trader in Alexandria. Of his separation from his connections for the last time, as they all supposed, I had

an account from one who was an eye-witness. Such scenes must be substantially the same, wherever they occur, and though most deeply affecting, need not be described. Fortunately for the poor slave, his case became known to Dr. S., a member of the same church, and one whose christian beneficence knows no other limit than his means. He could not bear to see a worthy christian brother torn in this manner from his relatives, his birth-place, and the privileges of the christian church, and being joined in his enterprise by another member of the same church, they resolved, though with considerable personal inconvenience, to step between him and perpetual banishment. They accordingly followed him to Alexandria, and at length induced the trader to sell him, though at a large advance beyond what he had himself given. I shall leave you to imagine the joy of the poor man, when, instead of receiving his order to embark for New Orleans, the doors of the slave prison were opened, and he was permitted to return with his christian brethren to Washington. He is now employed in slowly earning the price of his liberation, and when this is accomplished he will find himself not only free, but in the midst of his kindred and friends.

This evening I have been deeply interested in conversing upon the subject of American slavery

with the gentleman mentioned at the beginning of this letter. He thinks there can be no greater absurdity, than to suppose that the whole colored race in the United States are to be removed to Africa; and this he maintains, notwithstanding his strong attachment to the Colonization Society, in whose cause he has labored long and faithfully. He does not believe, on the other hand, that the two races will ultimately occupy the same territory, but that the blacks will possess some portion of the southern country to the exclusion of the whites. He states his conviction, also, that the slaves will all be free at no distant period, and that it is the part of wisdom to consider the event as neither doubtful nor remote, and to make all necessary preparations for it. The kind of preparation which he recommends is precisely that which the American Union desire,—the general diffusion among the slaves of moral and religious influence, that they may become not only a free, but an intelligent and virtuous portion of the community, whether separate, or still mingled with the white population.

The friends of the colonization cause are the only persons, whom I find in this quarter evincing a deep interest in the improvement of the African race, and such I know to be the case in states still farther south. Some regard their improvement

only as subsidiary to colonization, but others consider it as a thing most desirable in itself, and without regard to their final settlement.

There is, at this time, a strong feeling of indignation, in this city, against the measures of the northern abolitionists, which renders any attempt to improve the condition of the colored people far more difficult than it was but a short time since. The excitement is greatest among the advocates of perpetual slavery, and least of all among the friends of colonization ; but all the friends of the African race deplore the interference which has occasioned it.

## LETTER XVIII.

WASHINGTON, JULY 22, 1835.

THIS morning I was introduced to a clergyman who has an extensive acquaintance in the northern part of Virginia. He represents the present emigration from that state to the south-western states as very great. The land-holders in some parts of Virginia are becoming poorer nearly in direct proportion to the number of their slaves and the extent of their plantations, while those of Mississippi and Louisiana are growing rich with unexampled rapidity. In consequence of this, the planters in Virginia are selling their plantations as fast as possible, and removing with their slaves. When sales cannot be made, on account of the scarcity of purchasers, the younger members of the family often remove, taking with them a share of the slaves, and commence new plantations in the south, while the other members of the family remain in Virginia.

When neither the planter nor his family remove, the slaves are sometimes let upon hire to others

who are removing, and who are not furnished with the requisite number of laborers to enable them to cultivate a large plantation. Many of those who let their slaves upon hire, are such as are either particularly attached to them, or are, from principle, indisposed to sell them, while they are still unable to furnish them with profitable employment upon their own plantations. Wages are now so high, in Mississippi and Louisiana, as to amount, in a few years, to the market value of the slaves; and some masters, who have felt unable or unwilling to emancipate them without compensation, are taking this mode to acquire the price of their freedom. The labor upon the cotton plantations is in general not very severe, and the climate of the cotton region in the south-western states, though commonly prejudicial to the health of the whites, is favorable to that of the slaves. In many cases, when the younger members of a slave family have been sent to a southern plantation, they have been so much gratified by their change of situation, as to send the most favorable account of their circumstances to their relatives in Virginia, urging them to embrace the first opportunity to join them and share in their abundance. Cases of this kind are of so frequent occurrence, that it is said, the slaves in general do not now, as formerly, consider it a great evil to remove to the south, unless the

removal occasions a separation of family connections. The increasing poverty of the planters in Virginia, and their consequent inability to furnish a comfortable support for their slaves, increase the desire on the part of both master and slave to remove to a land of greater abundance.

A gentleman, in one of the poorer counties of Virginia, has nearly two hundred slaves, whom he employed, for several years, upon a second rate plantation of eight or ten thousand acres, and who constantly brought him into debt. At length he found it necessary to purchase a smaller plantation, of good land, in another county, which he continues to cultivate for no other purpose but to support his slaves.

The clergyman, from whom I derived most of this information, represents the free blacks, in the District of Columbia, as in a very deplorable situation; ignorant, poor and vicious, and often exposed to great sufferings by their poverty, especially during the winter. Their sufferings he thinks, are, in most cases, directly occasioned by their sloth. There are some schools for colored children in Washington, in addition to the Sabbath schools: but upon the whole very little is done for their improvement as a class. The slaves of the District, employed, as they generally are, as domestics,

are thought to be in a much better condition than the free blacks. There are many colored members of the Methodist churches in this city, but such is their ignorance, and so numerous are their temptations, that they occasion much anxiety and trouble to the churches with which they are connected.

At the house of Dr. S., this evening, I saw and conversed with an intelligent colored woman, who related many cases of the cruel separation of families by the domestic slave-trade. Among others, she mentioned a grandson of her own, whose case I found was by no means peculiar. He was a slave about twenty-two years old, and was induced, by offers of assistance from a white man, to run away from his master, for the purpose of escaping to a free state. The man who had promised his assistance proved his betrayer, and carried him to New Orleans, where he sold him as a slave. For a long time his relatives supposed that he was dead, but they had at last heard the particulars of his fate, from one who saw him at New Orleans. The natural love of liberty, on the part of the slave, is said to be often imposed upon in this manner.

JULY 23.

THIS morning I called at the office of Judge Cranch, in company with Mr. F., to whom I am indebted for many attentions. My object was to ascertain such facts, respecting the colored people, as might be found in his office, since it is in the court over which he presides, that the criminal cases occurring in the District are tried. Slaves, however, are never tried in this court, but by magistrates. It appeared that of one hundred persons confined for crime, either before or after trial, in the jail in this city, thirty-four were persons of color. Of the number of trials, however, as they appeared in a single docket consulted for the purpose, only thirty-one out of one hundred and seventy-six were cases in which colored persons were defendants.

A very interesting fact was stated casually by Judge Cranch, respecting the colored people connected with Methodist churches in this city. He remarked that their reputation is in general good, and that *they are seldom or never brought before the criminal courts for misconduct.* This testimony appeared to me of the highest interest and importance. It was but yesterday, as I have previously stated in this letter, that an excellent clergyman was lamenting the ignorance, and the low state of

piety among these very persons, and yet, low as is their standard of Christian principle, and imperfect as their knowledge of duty is known to be, it is sufficient, according to the testimony of this upright and enlightened Judge, to preserve them, almost perfectly, from the commission of those overt acts of crime, to which their situation so powerfully tempts them, and of which their irreligious brethren are so frequently guilty. If such is the effect of religious principle, we need not look to legislators to devise plans for elevating the character of the colored race, though their aid, if well directed, may be of great value. We are to rely upon the church of Christ for effecting, through the influence of the gospel, that great change which will fit this depressed and now ignorant race to become useful and happy members of the communities to which they shall belong.

A number of slave-dealers reside in this District within view of the Capitol, and their advertisements constantly appear in the various newspapers of the city. In fact, the "ten miles square" are the very seat and centre of the domestic slave-trade. This is an outrage upon public sentiment, which ought not to exist at the seat of our national government. The privilege of opening a slave-market, with as much publicity as was ever enjoyed by a slave-factory upon the coast of Africa, is wholly

distinct from the right to own slaves ; and even if the latter were continued, the former ought not to be tolerated. Why should it be piracy to purchase a cargo of slaves in Congo and offer them for sale in Charleston, while it is lawful to procure them in Alexandria or Washington and transport them to the same market ? Is it because the negroes in the former case are reduced to slavery for the purpose of supplying the trade, and in the latter they are only continued in slavery ? If the fact were so, the reason for the distinction would still be unsatisfactory. Are a man's rights less important because he has been long deprived of them—perchance even from the days of helpless infancy ? But the fact is often otherwise. The African tribes acquire slaves as well for their own use, as for market, and hence the slave brought from the African shore, like his companion in tribulation purchased at Washington, only changes his place of servitude ; with this difference, however, that the former is brought to a more enlightened country, the latter often plunges into deeper moral darkness.

Is it because the trade in one case is carried on between independent states, and in the other between states which are confederate ? Why should this make a difference in the crime ? In either case the slave is torn from home and kindred and friends, and carried to a distant land, where he

is compelled to spend his life in toiling for those to whom he has given no right to control his actions. But even this ground of distinction fails in those states which claim to be sovereign and independent.

The subject of slavery in the District of Columbia is one which is completely within the power of Congress, *acting as the legislature of the District*; and should they even adopt a plan of general emancipation, provided the rights of their constituents in the District were regarded, the south would have no more reason to complain, than of a similar act on the part of the legislature of Virginia or Maryland.

To the state governments belongs exclusively the control of this subject within the several states; and no one not included within their limits, can properly complain of them for exercising their right. To Congress, in like manner, it belongs to determine whether slavery shall continue in the District of Columbia, and no state or states has a right to interfere with them, should they think proper, *in compliance with the wishes of the people of the District*, to adopt a rational system of emancipation. The expediency, or even the justice of such interference, without the request of a majority of the people of the District, may be questioned.

This District presents the curious anomaly, in a republican government, of a people governed by laws enacted by a legislature not elected by them selves, and over whom they have no more control than had our ancestors over the British parliament. It will scarcely be believed, that, in consenting to place themselves under such a government, they anticipated the enactment of laws contrary to their wishes, and deeply affecting the very constitution of the society in which they live. At the same time, it is believed that the interest felt by a large majority of the inhabitants of the District, in the continuance of slavery, is very inconsiderable, and, but for the recent excitements, it is not improbable that they would have been willing, even now, to petition Congress for the final extinction of the system within their limits.



## LETTER XIX.

WASHINGTON, JULY 23, 1835.

I HAVE visited to-day, in company with my friend Mr. F., the penitentiary devoted to the criminals of the District. The buildings stand in a very pleasant situation, near the Potomac, a mile or two below the city. Every facility was here afforded to my inquiries by the warden, Mr. Clark, who conducted us through the prison, and pointed out everything important connected with the establishment. The arrangements of the prison appeared to be of the most perfect kind, and its internal management pre-eminently excellent.

The prison is provided with a physician and a chaplain. Six of the convicts, it is believed, have become pious since their admission. There is but one female convict, who is a colored girl, and has been once discharged, but was subsequently re-committed, to her great joy, as she says, "because it keeps her from bad company!"

From the records of the prison, it appears, that since its establishment, the whole number of con-

victs, received from the District, has been 109, of whom 53 were colored persons. Of the latter number, 44 were committed for theft, 7 for manslaughter, 1 for forgery, and 1 for horse-stealing; or 45 for stealing, and 8 for other crimes. Theft, where the value of the goods exceeds five dollars, is a ground of commitment, and the shortest period of confinement is one year. A large proportion of those who are brought before the criminal courts of the District are addicted to intemperance. The number of free white persons in the District, in 1830, was 27,563, and of free colored persons 6,152; so that the latter were about two ninths of the former, while the number of the convictions for crimes which are punishable by confinement in the penitentiary, is about equal in the two classes. Such facts show that the condition of the free people of color is, at present, a very unfortunate one, and evince the necessity of efficient measures for promoting the influence of moral principle among them, and for removing from their situation everything, which tends to degrade them and to vitiate their character.

This evening I have seen old Anna, the unfortunate slave mentioned under date of the 21st instant, as having thrown herself from an upper window, many years since, while distracted at being violently separated from her husband. She was

born near Bladensburg. Her "old master," as she calls him, in whose family she was born, and of whom she speaks with great respect, became involved in debt, and the sheriff was about to seize his property. Finding he could no longer retain his slaves, he consented to sell Anna to her husband's master, for she was now married to a slave upon a neighboring plantation, and was the mother of two little girls. In her new situation, Anna was treated unkindly, and was compelled to work very hard, both in the house and in the field. Her new master soon died, but her circumstances were not improved at his death; and when she had been in this family about a year, their affairs also became much involved in consequence of the improvidence of her young master, who was very extravagant in his expenses, and dissipated in his habits, or, as old Anna expresses it in her dialect, he was "*very rapid.*" It now became necessary that this family, in its turn, should dispose of a part of their few slaves to pay their pressing debts, and it was determined that Anna, who had been last purchased, should be sold with her children. Anna is so ignorant, and so many years of sorrow have now passed over her, since the occurrences, that she cannot tell the ages of her little girls. She only says, "*the youngest was about so high, and the oldest about so much higher,*" raising her crippled

arms, as if to show us their height by putting her feeble hands once more upon their heads. From her description, their ages might have been three and six years.

When Anna heard that she was to be sold to a man from Georgia, she "went," as she says, "upon her knees to her young master, and begged him that she and her children might not be separated from her husband and their father." Vice seems not yet fully to have hardened his heart, for it is plain from Anna's simple narrative, that he was moved by her appeal, and "swore," as she says, "a great oath, that they should not be separated." He did not, however, find it convenient to adhere to his promise, and soon after, her husband was one day sent away to work at a remote part of the plantation, and "the man from Georgia," as she calls her purchaser, came in the meantime to her master's house. And now she was ordered to take her children, and go immediately with her new owner. She says "she was dreadfully frightened, and did not know what to do," when they took her by force and compelled her to go. She does not remember anything distinctly which followed, and has only a recollection of a dreadful state of terror and affright, in which she seems to have been deprived of the use of her reason, and to have become frantic with grief and appre-

hension. During this state she was brought to Washington, and was placed, with a great number of others, in the upper room of a three-story house in F. street. During the night, she threw herself from the window, and fell upon the pavement. Her arms were broken and dislocated, and her lower limbs and back dreadfully injured. Her master, perceiving that she could never be of any use to him, left her lying in the garret to which she had been carried, and taking her little girls and his other slaves, departed with them to Georgia.

It was then winter, and poor Anna's sufferings were extreme, not only from broken limbs and bruises, but from cold. She was alone, without fire, with no one to help her, and was totally unable to help herself. Sometimes she suffered greatly from thirst occasioned by fever, and often from cold, when the blanket which covered her would slip from her, and she could not replace it, so that when the physician came to see her in the morning—for a physician sometimes visited her—he would find her, as she says, "more dead than alive."

Her bones were either not set in a proper manner, or did not remain so, and one of the bones of her left arm has protruded two or three inches below the wrist, and is only kept from pushing its way through, by means of the integuments. The wrist

of the other hand also is nearly useless. When she was able to leave her bed, the man at whose house she had been left, claimed her as his slave, alleging that her Georgia master had given her to him, and she was therefore compelled to remain at Washington, where her husband also came to live, some time after her recovery.

Since Anna has lived at Washington, she has had four children, two only of whom are now living—a son and a daughter. Her husband continues a slave, but is allowed one dollar and fifty cents a week from his wages, for the support of himself and family. She says she has never learned to “read book,” but, since her afflictions, she hopes that she has become a child of God. For some time, she could not bear to think of seeing the family, who by selling her had occasioned all her affliction; but when she thought so, she says she was unhappy, and at length “she had a heart to pray that she might forgive them, and that God would forgive them, and then she was happy.” At length she saw her old mistress, who reproached her very much for having been unwilling to go to Georgia!

After some years, the man at whose house she had been left, claimed her children also, and took them away, but Anna applied to the Attorney for

the District, who obtained "free papers" for her and her children.

She has never heard from her little girls, who were carried to Georgia, and does not expect to know anything about them in this world. She says "she has done mourning about them, but always prays for them, and expects to meet them *up there*." She now blesses God for all her afflictions, because they have been, as she hopes, the means of her conversion ; and she seems especially grateful that her life was so remarkably preserved, at a time when she had not learned to be submissive to the will of God. She prizes greatly her religious privileges, and particularly her *class meetings*, which are the more valuable to her from her inability to read.



## LETTER XX.

ALEXANDRIA, JULY 24, 1835.

AFTER spending four days at Washington, I took passage in the steamboat this morning for this place.

My principal object in coming to this city was, to visit the establishment of Franklin and Armsfield, who have for some years been actively engaged in purchasing slaves for the southern market. From the gentlemen to whom I brought letters from friends in Washington, I have received every attention, and such directions as enabled me to accomplish the purpose of my visit.

The establishment to which I have alluded is situated in a retired quarter in the southern part of the city. It is easily distinguished as you approach it, by the high, white-washed wall surrounding the yards, and giving to it the appearance of a penitentiary. The dwelling-house is of brick, three stories high, and opening directly upon the street. Over the front door is the name of the firm, **FRANKLIN & ARMFIELD.** It was mid-day when

I arrived. The day was excessively warm, and the door and windows were thrown wide open to admit the air. On inquiring at the door for Mr. Armfield, he came forward in a few minutes from the yard in the rear of the building, and invited me into his parlor.

Mr. Armfield is a man of fine personal appearance, and of engaging and graceful manners. He is still in the prime of life, though he has been for many years engaged in the traffic in human flesh, by which he is supposed to have acquired great wealth. I explained to him frankly my object in visiting him, accompanying my statement with a request that I might be allowed to see his establishment. It was an important object in my journey to gain access to such an establishment, to see the slaves collected for transportation, and to ascertain the details of the traffic. I was not wholly without fears, that, after all my labor, I should meet with a refusal; but these apprehensions were soon dispelled, for he immediately, and apparently with great readiness, complied with my request.

Calling an assistant or clerk, he directed him to accompany me to every part of the establishment. We passed out at the back door of the dwelling-house, and entered a spacious yard nearly surrounded with neatly white-washed two story build-

ings, devoted to the use of the slaves. Turning to the left, we came to a strong grated door of iron, opening into a spacious yard, surrounded by a high, white-washed wall. One side of this yard was roofed, but the principal part was open to the air. Along the covered side extended a table, at which the slaves had recently taken their dinner, which, judging from what remained, had been wholesome and abundant. In this yard, only the men and boys were confined. The gate was secured by strong padlocks and bolts; but before entering we had a full view of the yard, and everything in it, through the grated door. The slaves, fifty or sixty in number, were standing or moving about in groups, some amusing themselves with rude sports, and others engaged in conversation, which was often interrupted by loud laughter, in all the varied tones peculiar to the negroes.

While opening the gate, my conductor directed the slaves to form themselves into a line, and they accordingly arranged themselves, in single file, upon three sides of the yard. They were in general young men, apparently from eighteen to thirty years old, but among them were a few boys whose age did not exceed ten or fifteen years. They were all—except one or two, who had just been admitted, and whose purchase was not yet completed—neatly and comfortably dressed, and, in

general, they looked cheerful and contented. As my conductor, however, was expatiating on their happy condition, when compared with that in which they had lived before they came to this place—a discourse apparently intended for the joint benefit of the slaves and their northern visiter—I observed a young man, of an interesting and intelligent countenance, who looked earnestly at me, and as often as the keeper turned away his face, he shook his head, and seemed desirous of having me understand, that he did not feel any such happiness as was described, and that he dissented from the representation made of his condition. I would have given much to hear his tale, but in my situation that was impossible. Still, in imagination, I see his countenance, anxiously and fearfully turning from the keeper to me, with an expression which seemed to say, like the ghost in Hamlet, “I could a tale unfold.”

After a short time, spent in walking around this yard, and examining the appearance of the slaves, we “passed out by the iron gate,” and crossing over to the right, we came to a similar one, which admitted us into a yard like that which we had just left. Here we found the female slaves, amounting to thirty or forty. These, too, were well dressed, and everything about them had a neat and comfortable appearance, *for a prison.* The inmates of

this apartment were of about the same ages as those who occupied the yard which I had just left. There was but one mother with an infant; and my guide informed me, that they did not like to purchase women with young children, as they were less saleable than others, in the market to which they sent their slaves. In answer to my inquiries respecting the separation of families, he assured me that they were at great pains to prevent such separation in all cases, in which it was practicable, and to obtain, if possible, whole families. Married slaves, he said, were generally preferred by purchasers to those who were single, because their owners felt more sure that they would be contented, and stay at home. In one instance, he remarked, they had purchased, from one estate, more than fifty, in order to prevent the separation of family connections; and in selling them, they had been equally scrupulous to have them continue together. In this case, however, they had sacrificed not less than one or two thousand dollars, which they might have obtained by separating them, as they would have sold much better in smaller lots. The women, in general, looked contented and happy, but I observed a few who seemed to have been weeping.

Near the yard in which the women were confined, was the kitchen, where the food of the slaves

was prepared. Here everything appeared neat and clean, and the arrangements for cooking resembled those which we usually see in penitentiaries. From the kitchen we went to the tailor's shop, where were stored great quantities of new clothing, ready for the negroes when they set off upon their long journey to the south. These clothes appeared to be well made, and of good materials; and in the female wardrobe considerable taste was displayed. Each negro, at his departure, is furnished with two entire suits from the shop. These he does not wear upon the road, but puts them on when he arrives at the market. In the rear of the yard, is a long building, two stories high, in which the slaves pass the night. Their blankets were then lying in the sun at the doors and windows, which were grated like those of ordinary prisons. In a corner of the yard, a building was pointed out to me as the hospital; but such was the health of the slaves at this time, that the building was unoccupied.

Passing out at a back gate, we entered another spacious yard, in which four or five tents were spread, and the large wagons, which were to accompany the next expedition, were stationed.

Having examined everything, so far as the excessive heat would permit, we returned to the parlor. Everywhere, as I passed along, I observed

the most studied attention paid to cleanliness, continually reminding me of the penitentiary, which I visited yesterday at Washington. The fences and walls of the houses, both internally and externally, were neatly white-washed, and there was also the same apparatus of high walls, and bolts, and bars, to secure the prisoners. In most respects, however, the situation of the convicts at the penitentiary was far less deplorable than that of these slaves, confined for the crime of being descended from ancestors who were forcibly reduced to bondage. Most of the former are confined for a few years only, and then go forth as free as the judge by whose sentence they had been imprisoned. While in confinement, at morning and at evening, and upon each returning Sabbath, they assemble like a well ordered christian household, receive religious instruction, and unite in the songs of thanksgiving and praise which ascend to the common Parent of all. Far different is the condition of the slave. He is a prisoner for life; and in his long and hopeless bondage he may seldom hear the voice of the religious teacher.

In the parlor, I again met Mr. Armfield, who, during my absence, had been negotiating for the purchase of a slave, and had just concluded a bargain. Here I was again treated with great polite-

ness, and refreshments of various kinds were offered me.

The number of slaves, now in the establishment, is about one hundred. They are commonly sent by water from this city to New Orleans. Brigs of the first class, built expressly for this trade, are employed to transport them. The average number, sent at each shipment, does not much exceed one hundred and fifty, and they ship a cargo once in two months. Besides these, they send a considerable number over land, and those which I saw were to set off in this way in a few days. A train of wagons, with the provisions, tents, and other necessaries, accompanies the expedition, and at night they all encamp. Their place of destination is Natchez, where Mr. Franklin resides, for the purpose of disposing of them on their arrival. Those which are sent by water, after landing at New Orleans, are sent up the rivers by steamboats to the general depot at Natchez, where they are exposed for sale.

As it is an object of the first importance, that the slaves should arrive at their place of destination "in good order and well-conditioned," every indulgence is shown to them, which is consistent with their security, and their good appearance in the market. It is true that they are often chained at night, while at the depot at Alexandria, lest they

should overpower their masters, as not more than three or four white men frequently have charge of a hundred and fifty slaves. Upon their march, also, they are usually chained together in pairs, to prevent their escape ; and sometimes, when greater precaution is judged necessary, they are all attached to a long chain passing between them. Their guards and conductors are, of course, well armed.

After resting myself a few minutes, I took leave of Mr. Armfield and of his establishment, and returned to my lodgings in the city, ruminating, as I went, upon the countless evils, which “man’s inhumanity to man,” has occasioned in this world of sin and misery.



## LETTER XXI.

*Steam-boat, on the Potomac,*

JULY 25, 1835.

THIS morning, at an early hour, I left Alexandria, and took my passage on board the steam-boat which plies between Washington and Potomac Creek. Among my fellow-passengers is a young man of the name of N. He is a slave-trader, and is now on his way from Washington to South Carolina with about fifty negroes, whom he has recently purchased.

He informs me that he has been employed in this way about two years, but that his uncle, with whom he is connected in business, has followed the same employment for fourteen years. He takes all his slaves by land from Fredericksburg through Cartersville in Virginia, and Salisbury in North Carolina. Formerly, the firm sent a portion of them by water, and last winter they despatched two vessels freighted with slaves, one of which reached Charleston safely, but the other, having seventy-five negroes on board, was driven off by

storms to Bermuda, where the negroes all escaped to land, and consequently obtained their liberty. Their owners had taken the precaution to get an insurance of \$30,000 upon them, and this sum they expect to recover, but the rest N. supposes that they shall lose. A by-stander suggested to him that he would find it for his interest to apply to the government of the island. He replied that this would do no good; that Armfield had lost a whole shipment in the same way, and could get no redress. "But why don't you go there and claim them?" "Because," said N.,—mingling with his reply more profanity than I care to record,—"**A NIGGER IS JUST AS FREE THERE, AND STANDS JUST AS GOOD A CHANCE IN THEIR COURTS AS A WHITE MAN!**" How sad a perversion of justice such a country must exhibit!

This man, N., is the perfect counterpart in his appearance to Mr. Armfield, being vulgar in his manners, and mean in his personal appearance. It is painful to think that such a man should have it in his power to control so great a number of his fellow-beings, and especially women and children. The greater part of the slaves now on board are young mothers, from eighteen to twenty-five years old, with their children, many of them infants. The rest consist of boys and young men; but the latter do not appear to be the husbands of the

females who are on board. From my conversation with N., I find reason to conclude that in almost every case, family ties have been broken in the purchase of these slaves. Husbands are here whose wives remain in the District, and wives are now looking back upon the dome of the Capitol, which is still in sight, and near which their husbands reside, whom they are never more to meet.

In selling his slaves, N. assures me that he never separates families, but that in purchasing them he is often compelled to do so, for that "his business is to purchase, and he must take such as are in the market!" "Do you often buy the wife without the husband?" "Yes, very often; and frequently, too, they sell me the mother while they keep her children. *I have often known them take away the infant from its mother's breast and keep it, while they sold her.* Children, from one year to eighteen months old, are now worth about one hundred dollars. That little fellow there," pointing to a boy about seven or eight years old, "I gave four hundred dollars for. That fellow," pointing to one about eighteen, "I gave seven hundred and fifty for last night, after dark. I sold seven fellows the other day, to Armfield. He just made me an advance of fifty dollars a head." "How many does your house purchase in a year?" "I go six

times a year to South Carolina, and never take less than forty. Armfield does not usually buy more than about ten or twelve hundred annually ; he sends over land but once a year,—in midsummer. There's an immense deal doing now in the business, the price is so high ;—the owners can get almost anything they ask. I offered the other day twelve hundred dollars for two girls, and their owner got thirteen hundred, a day or two after. A first-rate field-hand is well worth nine hundred, and would bring it, if the owners did but know it. A good mechanic is worth twelve hundred. Mine are nearly all field-hands ; but I shall not take a cent under one thousand for the men, when I get to Carolina. Did you notice the brig that was hauling in as we came out from Alexandria, this morning ? She was one of Armfield's,—she sails in September. He has a first rate brig building in Baltimore expressly for this trade. The brig Uncas, Capt. B., is also employed by Armfield, and is now at Baltimore." These facts I learned also at Mr. Armfield's, yesterday. "When husbands and wives are separated, do they seem to care much about it ?" "Sometimes they don't mind it a great while, but at other times they take on *right smart*, for a long time." "Do you find many slaves in the market ?" "Yes, I never found them plentier ; but the price is *monstrous*

*high*, and that, in fact, is the very reason so many are willing to sell." "You have a great proportion of children." "Yes,—they sell well in Carolina—but they wont go in Mississippi;—Armfield never takes them if he can help it." "How will your field-hands be employed?" "In making cotton." "But your women can't do much with such small children." "O yes, they 'll do a *smart chance of work*, and raise the children besides."

N., who takes me for a southerner, as most strangers do, is quite communicative. Finding that I have recently been in Baltimore, where I was acquainted with some of the traders, and that I was yesterday at Mr. Armfield's, he seems to suppose me a planter deeply interested in the price of slaves. He does not swear quite as much as he did when I first came on board—probably because he is alone in it; but he enters with great spirit into conversation respecting the trade. He says that if the firm to which he belongs have lost the forty thousand dollars, which the negroes were worth who escaped at Bermuda, they had made it before they lost it. On their journeys over land, he informs me that they travel on an average, twenty-five miles a day. At first they become a little tired, but afterwards they get on very well. The small children are drawn in the wagons. I told him that Mr. Armfield was at great pains to dress

his negroes well when they get to market. N. says that he does the same, and that they will sell much better for being well dressed.

The negroes on board the boat appear, in general, indifferent to their situation; whether they fully understand it I do not know. To threaten to sell a slave to a southern dealer, was formerly the most effectual mode of enforcing obedience; but it would seem that there are now limits to this mode of terrifying. I was assured, in Alexandria, that it was not uncommon for servants in that town, when about to be sold, to request that they might be sold to Mr. Armfield; and his clerk told me that they had numerous applications from servants, requesting that they would purchase them. Mr. Armfield has acquired the confidence of all the neighboring country, by his resolute efforts to prevent kidnapping, and by his honorable mode of dealing.

Nothing, however, can reconcile the moral sense of the southern public to the character of a trader in slaves. However honorable may be his dealings, his employment is accounted infamous. He can hold no rank in society, nor can he, by any means, push his family into favorable notice with persons of respectability. The *sale* of slaves, also, is said to be generally accounted disreputable, unless the character of the slave, or the pecuniary circum-

stances of the owner induce him to do it, but apologies for this are rarely wanting.

I observed the slaves on board the boat while eating their breakfast, and was glad to see that their food was such as they might well relish. Not that there is any merit in feeding slaves well, while on their way to market, or in dressing them well after their arrival; but because it is pleasant to see them—however dark may be their future prospects—enjoying an interval of happiness, or at least of exemption from corporeal suffering. It is undoubtedly true, that the jockey is at equal pains to present his horses sleek and well trimmed in market, and the principal motive of each of these traders is to increase his profits. There was, however, something indescribably affecting, in looking at the little children while taking their meal, all unconscious of the wrongs which they are suffering, and of the still greater ones to which they will be exposed. As they sat in a circle upon the forward deck, and ate their corn-bread and bacon, and looked around with childish wonder upon the strange sights and faces with which they were surrounded, it was difficult to act the part of an indifferent spectator, and not to execrate openly the man who, to increase his own wealth, is hurrying these unconscious little beings into a distant and hopeless slavery.

And yet, of what crime has this man been guilty ? If slavery is a good thing, if it is “ an ordinance of heaven,” this man is a necessary link in the chain. If slaves are property, and are to continue such, they must, like other property, change owners ; and the slave-trader is but the merchant by whose intervention the article changes hands, and no more deserves our censure than the drover, who takes the hogs and horses of Tennessee to a market in the Atlantic states. I am convinced, by all my inquiries, that the traders exhibit more proofs of humanity in their dealings, than a large portion of those from whom they purchase. Their trade is by common consent accursed, but it is the legitimate result of a system, which, in the nineteenth century, and in a christian land, has defenders, who maintain its expediency and its justice, independently of its necessity.

N. was asked whether there was no danger of his slaves escaping from him during their long march through the interior of the country. He replied that the principal danger occurs before they have left the District, while they are near their friends, and in a country with which they are well acquainted. While at Alexandria, a winter or two since, a man with his wife and infant child escaped from him, and he has never been able to recover

them. He has since learned, that the night when they escaped was so cold, as to cause the death of the child, but that the parents ultimately reached Philadelphia. He had been about to follow them, but his correspondent, who had originally informed him where they were, has since told him that they have removed, and he cannot find where they have gone.



## LETTER XXII.

FREDERICKSBURG, JULY 25, 1835.

THERE is now in the southern states a degree of excitement on the subject of slavery, which those at a distance can scarcely appreciate in a proper manner. This is partly the effect of long-cherished prejudices against the north, partly the result of the present state of political parties in the country, and, in no small degree, the consequence of the recent measures of northern abolitionists. For the two former sources of excitement, I know not that the north is answerable; for the latter, a portion of our citizens must no doubt be held in some degree accountable.

A dislike to northern institutions, to northern politics, and to northern men, has long been extensively indulged among the natives of the south. I have been an inhabitant of both sections of the country, and am ardently attached to both; but I must still bear the most unequivocal testimony to the existence of the prejudice to which I have referred. On the other hand, I must unhesitatingly

declare, that I have never, until perhaps very recently, seen any evidence of unkindness of feeling on the part of the citizens of the north towards those of the south. The policy which they have pursued, upon subjects connected with our national government, may sometimes have operated injuriously upon southern interests; but the *feelings* of the north were never, that I could perceive, hostile to their fellow-citizens of the south. I am aware that with those politicians who are accustomed to attribute every calamity to the tariff, and the tariff to a settled purpose entertained by northern men, to enrich themselves by the spoils of the south, the assertion which I have now made will scarcely obtain credit; but to those who are well acquainted with northern sentiments and feelings, I have no fear that the assertion will appear incredible.

Since I entered the slave-holding country, I have seen but one man who did not deprecate, wholly and absolutely, the direct interference of northern abolitionists with the institutions of the south. "I was an abolitionist," has been the language of numbers of those with whom I have conversed, "I was an abolitionist, and was laboring industriously to bring about a prospective system of emancipation. I even saw, as I believed, the certain and complete success of the friends of

the colored race, at no distant period, when these northern abolitionists interfered, and by their extravagant and impracticable schemes, frustrated all our hopes. We have no expectation that, in our day, the prospects of the slaves will ever again be as favorable, as they were at the moment when this ill-omened interference commenced. Our people have become exasperated, the friends of the slaves alarmed, and nothing remains, but that we should all unite in repelling the officious intermeddling of persons who do not understand the subject with which they are interfering. We will not be driven by northern clamors, or northern associations, to do that which we would gladly accomplish, in a prudent manner, if left to ourselves."

These views and feelings may be unintelligible to men who know nothing of southern society; but they are sentiments in which almost every man, woman and child, south of Pennsylvania, fully unites. Equally united are they, in the opinion that the servitude of the slaves is far more rigorous now, than it would have been, had there been no interference with them. In proportion to the danger of revolt and insurrection, have been the severity of the enactments for controlling them, and the diligence with which the laws have been executed.

But let me not be, as I think the people of the south generally are, unjust towards the abolitionists. Their efforts ought not, in general, to be confounded with those of mere incendiaries, such as are reported to have written and circulated in the south, a few years since, a paragraph intended to stir up the slaves to revolt. With such publications the writings of abolitionists are often confounded; and thus, while injustice is done to their authors, there is danger of producing, by misrepresentation, the very effects which the slave-holder deprecates. Such is the infirmity of human nature, that it is not safe to contemplate crime, as something with which we might possibly have some connection. Men who have been filled with horror, because they had dreamed, in the slumbers of the night, that they had committed murder, have afterwards deliberately engaged in its perpetration. Is there no danger that, while almost every southern paper is filled with accounts of "publications of an incendiary character," of "ferocious attempts to stir up the slaves to mutiny and massacre," with representations that "the north are fast uniting to break the bonds of the slave, and to coerce the south into measures of emancipation," is there no danger, even if northern sentiments and feelings should receive no disas-

trous bias, that the slave will be kept in a state of feverish excitement, and will be more prone to engage in dangerous plots, than he would have been, if not incited by such representations? Upon the north, these representations may produce but little immediate effect; since the newspapers of the south have there but a limited circulation; but upon the colored people of the south, it seems to me that their bad effect is certain. A sufficient number of these can read to enable them to obtain all the information from the newspapers which they perceive to be interesting to them, and through ten thousand channels of oral communication, such information is extended until it reaches the most ignorant slave, upon the most remote and secluded plantation. He may indeed misunderstand its import, but it at least keeps alive his thirst for liberty, and binds him more strongly to his fellows.

Such are the evils which, in the present case, arise from misrepresenting the real object of the abolitionists. Scarcely have they been driven, even by these misrepresentations, to utter sentiments in any case resembling those with which they are charged; and had their statements and arguments been calmly answered, they would probably have excited but little interest. Such an example of coolness, however, has not been set

by many of the leaders of abolition themselves, and they have therefore less of which they can complain. They have sometimes declaimed, when they should have reasoned; and when they have reasoned, they have often assumed premises in a great degree at variance with truth.

## LETTER XXIII.

FREDERICKSBURG, JULY 25, 1835.

A LADY of this city, who is ardently devoted to improving the condition of the colored race, related to me an anecdote which she had received from a physician residing at Washington. The doctor was called to visit a slave, who had been sick for some time, and whose master was very stern in the treatment of his slaves. He found him lying upon a heap of straw, and destitute of every external comfort. He spoke kindly to him, inquiring how he felt, but the negro made no reply, and did not appear to notice him. He repeated the question, but still received no reply. "Speak sharply to him," said his master, impatiently, "he is a surly dog." He again addressed him, when the negro, who was conscious that he was dying, stretching himself and composing his limbs, raised his eyes towards heaven and said, "thank God, I am free at last,"—and immediately expired. The doctor added—and I could not but love him for it—that without speaking to the master, he turned upon his heel, and left him to his reflections.

My friends here unite in opinion that the free blacks in Fredericksburg are more moral and respectable than many among the lowest class of whites. Some of the best mechanics of the city are colored men, and among them are several master-workmen, who employ considerable numbers of colored laborers.

Their opportunities for receiving religious instruction are but few. There is said to be no Sabbath school for their benefit, and they can seldom be present at public worship. Their instruction here has fallen, in a great measure, into the hands of the Baptists, as in Baltimore it is conducted by the Methodists. No regular bills of mortality are kept, either here or in the District of Columbia, and no precise estimate appears to have been formed of the comparative mortality of different classes; but it is the received opinion that it is greatest among the free blacks.

JULY 26, 1835.

THIS morning I attended public worship in the Episcopal church. At the close of the exercises, a contribution was taken up for the benefit of the Colonization Society. The preacher introduced the subject with great caution, remarking that there was probably no charitable object which better merited

the attention of his hearers, than that for the accomplishment of which this society was formed ;—that much zeal was felt, in many quarters, in relation to its object ;—that the colonies were in a very prosperous state ;—that they had flourishing churches in, he believed, all the settlements ;—that they were paying great attention to the education of their children ;—and, what was perhaps of still more importance, they were educating the children of the natives, and were presenting a barrier to an infamous traffic which had so long desolated the coasts of that unhappy country. Of the bearing of the society upon our own country, or upon any portion of its inhabitants, nothing was said. I had no means of knowing how large a contribution was taken up, but should judge from appearances that it must have been but a moderate one. I did not observe any colored persons present.

A portion of the constraint, with which the subject of slavery was formerly approached, has certainly been laid aside ; but it is still discussed with reserve and caution. This, however necessary, is painful to those who are accustomed to converse without constraint upon all topics of public interest, and whose thoughts and words are alike free.

In one point, I frequently find myself compelled to differ from my southern friends,—the right of the people of the north to discuss the tendency of

slavery, its evils, as respects every portion of the nation, and the remedies to be applied to prevent or correct those evils. Not a few declare that the northern people have no such right; that it is a violation of the compact between the states; and that, if persevered in, it will first exclude the northern literature entirely from the southern market, and ultimately produce a dissolution of the Union. This effect, it should be observed, is attributed to the ordinary and peaceable discussion of the topic. Some, however, are not disposed to push the prohibition quite so far; but even these will not allow to the *North American Review* and *Quarterly Observer*, for example, the same liberty in discussing the subject as to the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly Reviews*.

There is a dealer in slaves who has established himself in this town, where he is driving a very profitable business. He has his prison, with the usual appurtenances, which I went to view this evening, in company with a friend. We contented ourselves with an external view, and with looking through the fence which encloses the yard, without entering the place. The appearance of the establishment was not so neat as that of Mr. Armfield; but the slaves were well dressed and clean. They were in groups in the yard, conversing together with all the seeming indifference of persons in possession of their liberty. As we turned a corner of the yard, I

observed two or three negro women, from without, conversing through the fence with some who were confined in the yard, but apparently cheerful and happy. This trader is said to have about one hundred and fifty on hand at this time, whom he is soon to send off, over land, I believe, to New Orleans. He is not thought to treat his slaves so humanely as Mr. Armfield. A recent instance was mentioned of his sending off a number of mothers without their little children, whom he had purchased with them. He had separated them, because the children were of no value in the market to which the mothers were sent. It is difficult, however, in such reports, to separate truth from falsehood.

The windows of the buildings appropriated to the use of the slaves, were grated with iron, in the same manner as Mr. Armfield's, and in the same manner, also, as those of the penitentiary at Washington. The predecessor of this man is said to have been infamous for his cruelties, and very appalling stories are still told respecting him, but such as I had no certain means of verifying. It is obvious that, in general, the pecuniary interest of the trader will deter him from practising those cruelties upon the slave which would impair his value in the slave market. This, however, would not be sufficient to prevent the most revolting

instances of occasional cruelty arising from the influence of passion. Interest is the same motive which influences the jockey to be kind to his horse ; but it is well known, that, notwithstanding this motive, he is often extremely cruel. A gentleman, who has conversed much with slave-traders, tells me, that though mulattoes are not so much valued for field-hands, they are purchased for domestics, and the females to be sold for prostitutes. The latter fact I am sorry to state, but a regard to the high authority from which I received it forbids that it should be concealed. One of the worst effects of slavery is its depraving influence upon the moral character of female slaves, which is represented as most deplorable, and that, not in a few instances, but almost without exception. Whatever pains are taken with them while young, the influence of corrupt society is such as to lead them almost universally astray, and no objection seems to be felt to keeping in one's house female slaves, who have been guilty of crimes for which a white female would forfeit her life.

## LETTER XXIV.

FREDERICKSBURG, JULY 26, 1835.

THE change to which I have before alluded, in the sentiments of the slaves, in regard to removing to the south, is observable in this vicinity, and in general they are not particularly averse to such removal, except when it occasions a separation from their connections. Great numbers of slave-holders have recently removed, and are now removing from Virginia and North Carolina to the south-western states. These carry their slaves with them, and, settling in a fertile country, their own situation, and that of their slaves, is greatly improved. The negroes who remain at the north soon become acquainted with the improved condition of the emigrants, and are desirous of following them. Even when sold to a slave-trader for that purpose, they manifest less concern than formerly. A number of negroes in a neighboring county lately ran away from their master, and came to the trader in this city, requesting him to purchase them from their owner, and send them to New Orleans.

A gentleman in this city has a female slave whom he purchased from a trader, for the purpose of preventing her separation from her husband. Her former mistress had taken some offence at her, and had sold her to the trader, with the intention of having her carried out of the state. The husband and wife were both greatly distressed, and from compassion to them this gentleman purchased her. After this trouble was over, a year or two passed quietly away, when suddenly the husband, who had belonged to the minor heirs of an estate, was seized, just as a drove of negroes were setting off for the south, and immediately hand-cuffed to prevent his escape. He had been sold some little time previously, but had not been informed of his fate, until the hour of departure arrived. The gentleman who had purchased the wife, learning the circumstances, attempted again to prevent the separation of the husband and wife, by offering to sell the latter to the trader, provided he would guarantee that they should not be separated, when sold at the south. The trader was willing to purchase her, but said he could give no such guaranty, as he always sold his slaves to those who would pay the highest price, and he supposed it possible, that for this purpose he should have to separate them. Under these circumstances, the husband, who was much attached to his wife, begged her not to leave

her present situation, and thus they were finally separated.

A friend, to whom and to whose family I am indebted for many attentions, considers the final extinction of slavery as decisively indicated by the treatment which slaves now receive in the south, and particularly in Virginia, when compared with that which was common twenty or thirty years since. Even the advertisements for runaway slaves would serve to indicate a change in public sentiment, and in fact, as the same gentleman observes, are collectively a good index of the state of feeling, not only at the same place at different periods, but in different places at the same time. A Virginia advertisement usually contains a clause, stating, or implying, that the slave has run away, notwithstanding he has always been treated with the greatest indulgence; while advertisements from the extreme south are solely occupied, like those for stray oxen and horses, in describing their natural and artificial marks, their ages and habits.

He thinks, also, that in this state, slaves would have no value whatever as field-hands, were it not for the southern market. The labor performed by them is not sufficient to meet the current expenses of the plantations, at least of the more ordinary ones, and the only profit of the planter is derived from the negroes whom he raises for market.

It remains still to be determined whether, if wages were paid to the slaves in place of their present regular supplies, and in proportion to the amount of services rendered, a different result would not be obtained. That this experiment will soon be made, I have great confidence, and am inclined to believe that, if judiciously made, it will succeed. This practice, begun with the slaves early in life, and accompanied with mental and moral cultivation, may prove the first step towards a complete and most happy change in the agriculture of this state, and in the condition of the laborers. Fear, in some of its forms, is now the moving principle of the laborer; then he will be influenced by hope; and this single change will prove, I doubt not, sufficient to resuscitate the now palsied energies of one of the finest portions of our country. So fine is the climate and so mild are the winters here, that agricultural labors may be continued through a far greater portion of the year than at the north. Let Virginia be cultivated by laborers who shall be influenced by the hope of increasing their own enjoyments, and New England may yet find, that her own barren and frozen hills are no longer capable of coming in competition with the soil and climate of the more favored south.

## LETTER XXV.

RICHMOND, JULY 28, 1835.

IN my journey yesterday from Fredericksburg to this place, I travelled with a planter, who had emigrated from North Carolina to Louisiana, where he has resided for several years, but is now about to remove from his plantation to a more healthy one in a different part of the same state. His present journey was undertaken partly for the purpose of increasing the number of his slaves ; and he had just completed the purchase of one hundred and fifty-five, the entire stock of a plantation near Fredericksburg. For these he had given seventy-five thousand dollars, or about five hundred dollars, on an average, for each. They included mechanics of every kind necessary upon a great plantation. The purchaser was still young, and exhibited, in a striking degree, that promptitude and decision of character, so often observable in those accustomed early to direct their own conduct and that of others. Visions, perhaps I ought rather to say sober calculations, of boundless wealth, to be acquired by the

labor of his slaves, were alluring him forward, and though naturally humane in his feelings, his kindness to the slaves will probably go no farther than to provide for their animal wants, regardless of their high destinies as moral and intelligent beings. He was not wholly without apprehension that his hopes of soon acquiring a vast fortune might be frustrated by a fall in the price of his staple production, cotton. He remarked that he should soon pay for his slaves, if the present price of cotton continued; and that he should ultimately succeed, if it did not fall below twelve and a half, or even ten cents, but that he could not afford to go below that price.

He represents the cares of the master upon an extensive plantation as very great. These are much increased in case of sickness among the slaves, as they cannot in general be depended upon to nurse one another, and the whole care of them while sick often devolves upon the master. He says "their weekly rations in Louisiana consist of eight or ten quarts of corn meal and four pounds of northern pork; for the latter of which, in the winter, bacon is commonly given to them, and molasses also is frequently substituted for the whole or a part of the pork, at the rate of a pint of the former for a pound of the latter. Some make use of salt fish instead of pork; but this is generally thought objectionable, on

account of its tendency to create violent thirst. The negroes commonly choose to receive their corn-meal, rather than its equivalent in bread, that they may cook it for themselves. Rations of spirits are never given to them, except upon peculiar and rare occasions, as at *corn shucking*, and the like. It is therefore extremely rare that a negro is seen intoxicated, and still more so that he acquires a habit of intemperance."

To the inquiry, how do the slaves in Louisiana usually spend the Sabbath? he replied: "generally in complete idleness; lolling in the shade, or basking in the sun. Some of them are disposed to go to preaching, when there is an opportunity; but the greater part consider it a hardship to be compelled to attend meeting. They are universally attached to the Baptist, rather than to any other church, and seem to consider 'going into the water,' as a most essential part of religion. "This," he observes, "may perhaps be attributed in part to its involving an act of self-denial, as they are doggedly averse to bathing or washing, for the purposes of cleanliness. This indisposition to practise ablutions for the promotion of health and cleanliness, is nearly universal, and they can scarcely be more offended by anything, than by a compulsory system of bathing or of washing their clothes. If not compelled to do it, they would never wash a gar-

ment from the time when it is put on new, until it is worn out. Even house servants must be watched like children, or most of them would neglect attention to cleanliness.

“ Whatever indulgences, in regard to dress or other things, custom has established, as the right of the slave, he is very particular to require ; and if anything is withheld, he remembers it as his due, and asks for it, when he has an opportunity.

“ The slave-traders have exacted such a profit upon their slaves, that the planters, when intending to make a considerable purchase, either come to the north for the purpose, or employ a factor to whom they allow a stipulated commission on the purchase money. By such means only, can they prevent the combinations among the traders, to keep up the prices, as the infamy of the traffic operates to prevent great competition.”

A gentleman from Halifax N. C., represents the slaves as rapidly diminishing in that part of the state, by their removal to Alabama, and other southern states. In most cases, the masters emigrate with their slaves.

This morning I called upon Mr. P., a gentleman of distinction, to whom I had letters, and who was known to have recently published an article on the subject of northern abolitionism, full of alarm to southern slave-holders. He complains of us for

concerning ourselves at all with the subject, because no interference of the north can possibly, as he thinks, promote the true interests of the slave. Such, he says, has been the effect of the northern anti-slavery movements, that not an individual at the south dares to appear as the friend of emancipation. There was a time when they seemed to be near to the attainment of their object,—a prospective system of emancipation. To this object he had, as I well know, earnestly devoted himself; but he declares that he can no longer safely approach the subject.

I remarked upon the seeming absurdity of omitting all efforts for the removal of an acknowledged evil, because others had taken an injudicious course respecting it, “Would it not be wiser to attempt to check, and ultimately to remove the evils which must spring from a continuance of this system, rather than to do nothing but oppose the mad projects of abolitionists?” He replied that “it might be so, but the south would not act upon compulsion.” “But is the gradual extinction of slavery, by some practicable method, the same thing as yielding to the wishes of the abolitionists? Is not that the very course which they most of all disapprove? and do they not appear to consider *gradualism*, as they term it, more objectionable than even perpetual slavery? Is it not evident that the pres-

ent relations of southern society must ultimately change? and is it wise, from resentment at impertinent interference, to let the only time escape, in which it may be possible to act efficiently and successfully?"

I stated that the whole public sentiment of the north was decidedly opposed to slavery. Mr. P. replied, "so also is that of the south, with but a few exceptions. A small party only is contending for the propriety of perpetual bondage; this party is increasing, but is principally confined to South Carolina, where the dissertation of Prof. Dew has made some impression.

I then remarked, that though the sentiments of the north were irreconcilably averse to slavery, a large proportion of the talent and weight of character there was opposed to the movements of the abolitionists, upon the ground that the course recommended by them was founded in ignorance of the real relations of southern society, and of the difficulties in the way of its renovation. But was it wise, I asked, while they were doing what they could to give a prudent and safe direction to the public mind, to declare to the world that nothing should be done, until those who improperly interfered should abandon such interference?

Mr. P. remarked, that the subject had become connected with politics, but that he deprecated

any such connection, and was certainly conscious of being influenced by no considerations of that kind, in the part that he had taken. He regards it as an alarming feature in northern abolitionism, that it aims to carry the multitude with it, and to overpower by numbers.

The conversation, wherever I go, is now turning upon the insurrection in Mississippi, and upon the summary measures taken to quell it. Mr. P. remarked that the attempt was already made, but in his view very improperly, to connect this with abolitionism. Most persons, whom I hear speaking upon the subject, express great pleasure that the usual forms of law were in this case superseded by *Judge Lynch's* law.

Mr. P. says, he is not surprised that the doctrines of the abolitionists have gained ground to such a degree at the north. In the stand which they take in favor of human liberty, he declares that they are right. "God never intended that one portion of mankind should be held in bondage by another. Being abstractly right in this position, it is not wonderful, that persons who are ignorant of the difficulties in the way of emancipation, should be clamorous that it should occur immediately. The only wonder is, that there should be intelligence enough at the north to present so powerful an opposition."



## LETTER XXVI.

*Steam-boat, on the Chesapeake.*

JULY 29, 1835.

A VIRGINIAN, of no little influence, with whom I conversed while in Richmond, says that “the Union must ultimately be dissolved, and that, for his own part, he cares very little how soon. It is impossible for the southern states to continue united, against such a combination as are now opposing their interests. The east and the west will always be united in measures injurious to the south.” I replied, “suppose the division to have been made ; what then ? In what manner are the southern states to be secured against the consequences of the rapid increase of their colored population ?” He replied, “they will have no ultimate security,—for the present, they could escape from the effects of the abolition agitation.” “But what is to be the end of slavery ? in what is it to result ?” “I don’t know ; I thank God I have very little to bind me here.”

The suspension of all measures for ultimate emancipation seems to be universally attributed, in

the slave-holding states, to the interference of the Anti-Slavery Society. That the movement, begun some years since in Virginia, was suspended solely, or even in any considerable degree, on that account, seems to me, however, wholly improbable. The Anti-Slavery Society has been regarded with no special alarm until very recently, while the efforts at the south to fix a period to the existence of slavery have been, for a much longer time, interrupted. The true solution is probably this. The southern movement was begun under the influence of a recent and appalling calamity. As time passed on, and no new disaster occurred, those who disliked to part with their property, and those who were perplexed to devise any plan of relief, became more willing to postpone their efforts. The increased demand for slaves in the south-western states, and the consequent advance in their price, contributed to the same effect. When slaves become unprofitable, or their designs are suspected, they can immediately be sold, and removed to a safe distance ; and a vast revenue is derived from their sale. The numerous emigrations of the whites, who carry their slaves with them, serve also greatly to diminish their number, and the consequent alarm respecting them. It is still true that apprehensions are occasionally entertained in Virginia of fresh insurrections ; but this fear

is not at present sufficient to stimulate to the adoption of measures for ultimate emancipation in opposition to the combined operations of interest, uncertainty respecting the proper measures to be taken, and resentment at northern interference. The latter, as being more chivalrous, is the reason alleged in public debates, and in newspaper paragraphs.

My inquiries in Richmond were much limited by the absence of almost all the gentlemen to whom I had letters. While there, I was also very ill; and my indisposition, together with the uncertainty whether my friends, and those to whom I had letters in Norfolk, were now there, determined me to omit visiting it on my return. Investigations relating to the condition of the colored people, cannot be made with propriety or even with safety in the present excited state of southern feeling, except by conversation with those to whom our motives are well known, and even then great caution is necessary.

BALTIMORE, JULY 31, 1835.

THE present high price of negroes is presenting a great temptation to unprincipled men to attempt to sell such as are free; and there is need of constant vigilance in the northern slave-holding states, to prevent the success of such iniquitous

attempts. From letters read to me yesterday by the Rev. Mr. McKenney, I became acquainted with an interesting case of this kind, of which the following is the outline. In one of the counties bordering upon the Chesapeake, a gentleman, about twenty years since, manumitted a number of his slaves. The deed of manumission was required by law to be registered within one year from its execution; but owing to some informality in the minute of the magistrate before whom it was acknowledged, it appeared to have been executed more than a year before it was recorded. Their owner died; and in his will took no notice of them, having never treated them as slaves, from the time when the deed was executed.

The defect in the instrument having been recently ascertained, a slave-trader who has purchased the right of the heir, is now attempting to reduce them again to slavery. A gentleman of the name of B., who has often distinguished himself as the friend of the oppressed African, hearing of the meditated wrong, caused a writ to be issued to apprehend the slave-trader, who had gone in pursuit of them. In this he had fortunately been successful. The suit, however, on which he has arrested him, has no connection with the case of the manumitted slaves, of whom I have spoken; but it affords time to warn them of a danger, of which

they have no more apprehension than any other free citizens of Maryland. Still the suit is far from being a fictitious one, or one in which the rights of humanity are not concerned. It is founded upon another transaction, of the same general nature, in which this dealer in slaves had borne a prominent part. A lady, who died some time since, had, by her will, directed that a certain female slave should be sold for ten years, and should then be free. She was accordingly sold for that term. Such sales of slaves, for a term of years, are not permitted, by the laws of Maryland, to be made to persons residing out of the limits of the state, or to professed dealers in slaves, who are accustomed to send their slaves to a market in another state. This slave-dealer, in violation of the law, purchased the female in question, and sold her to a regular southern trader, by whom it is said she has been sent to Norfolk, for the purpose of being shipped to New Orleans. What the issue of these cases may be, is still uncertain. The prosecutor is fearless, but such are the evasions to which the traders resort, that it is difficult to bring them to justice.

It is sometimes thought to be a proof of *moral* courage, boldly to denounce all who are concerned in the slave-holding system, although the assailant of slavery may never have left New England on his adventurous enterprise. But *physical* courage

is often to be exhibited by the southern friends of the colored race, to a degree of which the northern philanthropist is perhaps not fully aware. So desperate is the game which the illicit trader is playing, that he is prepared to carry it through, by almost any act of violence and blood, in case he is interrupted in his designs ; and if frustrated, the most summary vengeance is sure to be taken, if it is in his power. Several anecdotes are told of the personal intrepidity of Mr. B., the gentleman who has so nobly volunteered in the cases above specified. On one occasion, having been informed that a number of free negroes had been seized, and were then detained at a rendezvous of kidnappers, about twelve miles off, and that they were upon the point of being removed from the state, he immediately set off for their rescue, with such assistance as he could obtain. His movement, however, had been observed by a confederate of the gang, who set off at the same time to warn them of their danger. This fact, too, was known to Mr. B. ; and each exerting himself to the utmost, they arrived at the place of rendezvous almost at the same moment ; and the gang, notified of their danger, rushed out of the house to escape, at the same moment that an armed guard was stationed at every outlet to intercept their flight. The gang were accordingly apprehended, but not without a dangerous conflict ; and the free blacks in their possession were liberated.

On another occasion, having received notice that a vessel was proceeding down the bay with free colored persons on board, who had been kidnapped, and were forcibly detained, he hastened to the shore, and after hailing the vessel to no purpose, as the traders did not choose to stop, he took a small boat and boarded it, demanding the liberation of the free negroes. When they denied that they had any on board, he went among the slaves, telling them that if any of them had a right to freedom, they need not fear to say so—that he would protect them at all hazards. Several of them then told him that they were free. These he took before a magistrate, and caused an investigation to be had, which resulted in their liberation.



## LETTER XXVII.

BALTIMORE, JULY 30, 1835.

THE attention of the Methodist and Baptist churches has been turned, for many years, to the religious instruction of the colored population of the south, and they have labored, in this field, with the most encouraging success. Other churches have not been wholly unmindful of their duty in this respect, but none have equalled these, either in the extent of their labors, or in the number of their converts. The preachers, by whose labors these results have been accomplished, have been, in comparison with those of some other churches, plain and illiterate men; and though highly acceptable to the colored people, they have in general been held in little respect by many of the more intelligent part of the white population. The consequences have been, to some extent, unfavorable to the religious principles of the latter, who, unfortunately, but perhaps not unnaturally, came to regard piety as synonymous with ignorance.

The importance of furnishing preachers of a higher grade, in respect to literary attainments and polite accomplishments, has long been felt by the intelligent members of those churches, and a gradual change has been for some years in progress. A clergyman to whom I have been indebted for much valuable information respecting the condition of the colored churches, states that, many years since, a bishop of the Methodist church remarked to him, that a wide door was open at the south, and especially in South Carolina, for the religious instruction of the colored people, but that he had great difficulty in finding suitable persons to occupy the stations. He wished to find men who could understand the views and feelings of the slave, and who should still be so intelligent and well-bred as to be respected by the master. The time had been, he remarked, when masters would not permit their slaves to be taught, but now many were desirous that they should receive religious instruction. In this he supposed that in general they did not so much regard the good of the slave, as their own advantage. He attributed a considerable change in public sentiment, within his diocese, to the following incident, which had become extensively known :

A new overseer, who happened to be a religious man, had been employed by a gentleman to take

charge of an extensive plantation. The first morning after entering upon the discharge of his new duties, he called the slaves around him, addressed them affectionately, read a passage of scripture to them, and then, while they all knelt with him, he offered up fervent prayers in their behalf. He did the same at evening, and continued the practice from day to day. The slaves, convinced that he really cared for them, became strongly attached to him, and highly distinguished for good order, obedience and industry. The consequence was, that, in a short time, the plantation was better cultivated than it had ever been, and became remarkably profitable to the owner. Inquiries were soon made by neighboring proprietors into the cause of this change, and a conviction was produced in the minds of many, that religion was of great importance to the successful management of slaves.

For the following abstract of the number of colored persons in communion with the Methodist Episcopal church in the United States, I am indebted to the politeness of the Rev. William McKenney. The document is well fitted to produce in the public mind a high respect for the self-denying and truly christian labors of the pastors and teachers of that church.

Pittsburg Conference,	.	.	.	.	285
Ohio	"	.	.	.	502
Missouri	"	.	.	.	996
Kentucky	"	.	.	.	5,709
Illinois	"	.	.	.	72
Indiana	"	.	.	.	273
South Carolina	"	.	.	.	22,788
Virginia	"	.	.	.	8,083
Baltimore	"	.	.	.	13,851
Philadelphia	"	.	.	.	9,025
New York	"	.	.	.	516
New England	"	.	.	.	320
Holstein	"	.	.	.	2,593
Tennessee	"	.	.	.	4,674
Mississippi	"	.	.	.	2,622
Alabama	"	.	.	.	3,163
Georgia	"	.	.	.	7,421
Maine	"	.	.	.	8
N. Hampshire	"	.	.	.	8
Troy	"	.	.	.	69
Oneida	"	.	.	.	69
Genessee	"	.	.	.	109
					83,156

The conferences above-mentioned, although they include all the states and territories, are not limited by state lines. For example, the Philadelphia Conference takes in the whole of the eastern shore of Maryland, the states of Delaware, New Jersey, or a part thereof, and only a part of Pennsylvania. The Baltimore Conference includes all the western

shore of Maryland, a part of Pennsylvania, and all that part of Virginia, east of the Blue Ridge, which lies between the Potomac and Rappahannock rivers; and so of the rest.

The whole number of colored communicants, belonging to this church, it appears, is 83,156; and if to this were added the very large number included in the Baptist and other churches, it would be evident that the religious interests of our colored population have been by no means wholly neglected.

The assistant bishop of the Protestant Episcopal church in Virginia, has lately made the religious instruction of the colored people the subject of an interesting pastoral letter; and the Presbyterian churches are devoting particular attention to the same subject. The labors of Rev. C. Van Renssalaer have contributed more, perhaps, than any other occurrence, to stimulate the churches in Virginia and Carolina to greater efforts in this cause, and have shown that even northern clergymen, whose characters are a guaranty for their prudence and good intentions, may take a part in this great enterprise of improving the moral condition of that unfortunate race, without exciting formidable opposition. There is, however, such a

jealousy of foreign interference, that the work must be left principally to the southern churches; and in proportion as piety shall increase among the white population, exertions for the benefit of the slaves may be expected also to increase.

## LETTER XXVIII.

BALTIMORE, JULY 30, 1835.

To a stranger, one of the most revolting features in American slavery is, the domestic slave-trade; and hence the inquiry is so frequently made, whether this evil at least may not be abolished. Various plans have been proposed for the purpose, but none which appear feasible; and it may well be doubted, whether this feature can ever be obliterated while the general system remains. All which it appears possible to do, is to regulate the sales in such a manner, that husbands and wives, parents and young children, shall never be separated. This, no one can deny, ought to be done; and if the system cannot exist with this innovation, it ought not to be tolerated for a single hour. The domestic relations are at the foundation of all the virtue, and consequently of all the happiness of society, and everything inconsistent with the perpetuity of these relations ought at once, everywhere, and forever, to cease. But whether even this is practicable, is a question which I con-

fess my inability to answer. I cannot see how these separations are to be prevented, while the husband is the property of one master, and the wife and children of another, each master being wholly independent, and his slaves being considered as in the most absolute sense his property. The mode of accomplishing this change belongs to southern moralists to determine; but it is not a subject which they are at liberty to neglect, and least of all, can the christian, who acts in view of his Master's command not to separate those whom God has joined in the marriage relation, consent that such separations should be legalized by the laws of a state of which he is an active and responsible member.

When these relations are not violated, the character of the domestic slave-trade, considered as a part of the general system of slavery, depends upon the circumstances under which the transfer is made. If the condition of the slave is improved in everything essential, and especially if, with a full understanding of the nature of the transaction, he really desires the transfer, no additional wrong appears to be done by the new relation in which the parties are placed. This case, so far from being uncommon, is one which frequently occurs.

Removal at mature age from one's parents, kindred, and early friends, and separation from the

scenes of childhood, though often painful events, are unfortunately not peculiar to the African slave. They are the lot of the European emigrant, who seeks in the new world an asylum from the oppression and poverty of the old, and they are voluntarily encountered by a large portion of the enterprising youth of this country, who leave kindred and friends for a settlement in the western wilderness. These, indeed, are all animated by the hope that their circumstances in life may be improved by their removal ; but the slave too may be animated by the same hope, for slavery, like freedom, has its different degrees of joy and sorrow, of fear and hope, of pleasure and pain. The domestic slave-trade then is not, *under all possible circumstances of the slave*, an evil. To be accounted the property of another, is an evil, but being so accounted, it will be advantageous to him to be transferred to a better situation, even while he continues in slavery.

A literary friend who is a native of North Carolina, remarked to me to-day, that he could tolerate everything else about slavery better than the shocking separations, which he saw continually caused by the removal of slaves to the south and west. When I told him that the evil seemed inseparable from slavery in such a country as this, he reluctantly assented to the position, after a mo-

ment's hesitation, in a manner that seemed to me little short of ludicrous. My meaning had been, that a system, to which such evils were necessary incidents, was intolerable; his conclusion evidently was, that if it cannot be made better, it must be submitted to with all its inconveniences.

PHILADELPHIA, AUG. 1, 1835.

AMONG my fellow passengers from Baltimore was a dealer in slaves, whose principal field of operations is Maryland. We had also Mr. C., a southern planter, the owner of about a thousand slaves, the market value of which is nearly half a million. The former belongs to a class which is deservedly infamous; the latter, if no other blot is found upon his escutcheon than the purchase of these slaves for his own emolument, is an honorable man. How charming a virtue is consistency!

It is said that the mining operations of the *gold country* are now employing great numbers of slaves. The hopes, therefore, which have been entertained by many, that the central parts of Virginia and North Carolina, and the western districts of South Carolina and Georgia, would soon be inhabited by none but freemen, will suffer a disappointment, should the present system of mining continue. It

is probable also that this will prove to be the worst form which slavery has ever taken in those states.

All the southern gentlemen with whom I meet in this city, as well as those with whom I conversed in Virginia, speak of the increased severity to which the negroes are subjected, and ascribe it to the interference of the abolitionists. That their interference has been, thus far, wholly mischievous in its direct operation upon the condition of slaves, no one acquainted with the facts can doubt. Still I believe that, as a reason for the increased severity with which the slave is treated, it is given with but little reflection, and is at best but partly true. It is the very nature of slavery, if continued after the number of its subjects becomes so great as to be formidable, to increase in the severity of its restrictions. This effect was heightened suddenly and fearfully by the Southampton insurrection, which exhibited, in an appalling form, the danger to which the white inhabitants, residing upon the plantations, were exposed, from the slaves by whom they were surrounded. The first impulse, as it exhibited itself in the debates of the legislature of Virginia, was to remove the danger by a system of progressive emancipation, which should first prepare the slave for freedom, and then remove forever the fetters which bound him. Unfortunately, this impulse gradually ceased to

operate, but the danger, which had occasioned it, continued nearly the same. It remained, therefore, to increase the vigilance of the whites, and to remove from the slave, so far as it was practicable, every element of power. Hence has resulted a more fixed determination to keep him in ignorance, for "knowledge is power." This resolution has been confirmed by the interference of northern abolitionists, for this has heightened their present dangers; but, had no peril arisen from without, the natural increase of danger, from the constantly enlarging number of slaves, must soon have led to the same measures which have now been adopted for obtaining temporary security. The security afforded by such measures, however, can be but temporary. Like a torrent stayed in its course, it is but accumulating greater force, and preparing to burst forth at last with increased power, and to spread around it a wider desolation. To keep millions in ignorance, while knowledge, like the light of day, is beaming all around them, and to continue them in unconditional slavery, among a people who glory in being as free as the air of heaven, will be alike impracticable. The hope of freedom is cherished fondly by every slave; and were the cup of hope to be dashed from his lips—were he to see that slavery, without mitigation, and without end, was to be his portion—in that moment when hope

should be extinguished in his breast, rage and despair would arm him with a strength which would lay waste the fairest portions of our country, and cease its devastations only when the last throb should cease in the last, despairing heart.

It is in vain that we assure the slave that his present condition is preferable to that of the free negro;—he may see that it is so, but he feels that he has a right to freedom, in circumstances more favorable for its enjoyment than those in which the African is now placed in this country, when the fetters are removed from his body only, while his mind continues in slavery to ignorance and vice. By these he may be brutalized, but the brutes whom he will most resemble are not the ox and the ass, those patient and harmless drudges, who quietly toil for the benefit of their masters, but beasts of prey, who want only the power to destroy those by whom they are held in chains.

A tendency to the employment of brute force, or a coercion little short of force, seems to be one of the characteristics of the day in which we live, as indeed it has been, in various degrees, of all past ages. The master would coerce his slaves, the abolitionist would coerce the slave-holder, and the latter seeks in his turn, to restrain what he terms the madness of fanaticism, by the employment of physical force and intimidation.

This is, in fact, the tendency of ultraism, in all its various forms. The ultra advocate of temperance is unwilling to trust to the force of argument, though this has almost achieved for him the victory, but is disposed to finish his triumph by the more summary process of legal and ecclesiastical coercion. But it is a method of producing harmony which will succeed neither in the temperance, in the anti-slavery, in the anti-abolition, nor in any other cause ; and whatever gratification it may occasionally yield to those who resort to its aid, its mischiefs will usually, in the end, return upon their own heads. The feeling which prompts to coerce a christian brother to emancipate his slaves, by refusing to hold christian communion with him, is probably more akin to that which seeks to check abolitionism by tar and feathers and the gallows, than those who indulge the feeling are willing to believe.

The following principles have received continually fresh confirmation at every step of my journey, and in all my recent intercourse with my friends, whether at the north or the south. They are among the fundamental principles of the "American Union," and, by a uniform adherence to them, we may hope at length to remove the almost innumerable obstacles which now prevent

the desired improvement in the condition of the African race :

1. The intellectual and moral elevation of the free people of color demands the united efforts of all the friends of their race.

2. The instruction of the slaves is, by the laws of the land, intrusted to their masters, but it is a duty which they cannot neglect without great guilt as well as danger.

3. No measure can tend to the ultimate benefit of the slaves, in which the masters do not generally and heartily concur.

4. The north will never attempt to interfere with the slavery of the south, by any other means than by moral influence ; and, on the other hand, will never consider the question of slavery in our common country as one in which she has no concern.

5. Our only safety in the dangers which menace us in relation to slavery, must be sought in the influence of christian principles in every portion of the country, and among all classes of its inhabitants.







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Slavery and the domestic slave-trade

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Slavery and the domestic slave-  
trade in the United States

DATE

ISSUED TO

03 02 0 *Lona Dahl Page*

03 03 1

*RITA WILLIAMS*  
BX 309

03 13 2

*SHERRY TOMS*  
BX 309

